

PIONEER

Spring 2003



"OH, WHAT SONGS OF THE HEART":
Zion's Hymns as Sung by the Pioneers
P. 2

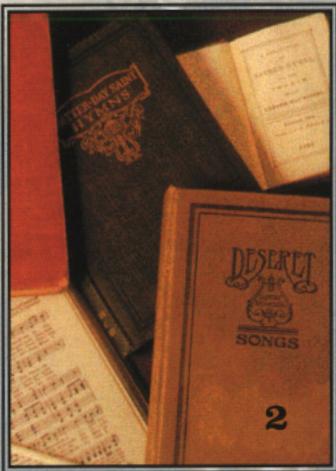
EMMA'S COLLECTION OF SACRED HYMNS:
A Legacy of Musical Expression
P. 14

Published by the Sons of Utah Pioneers

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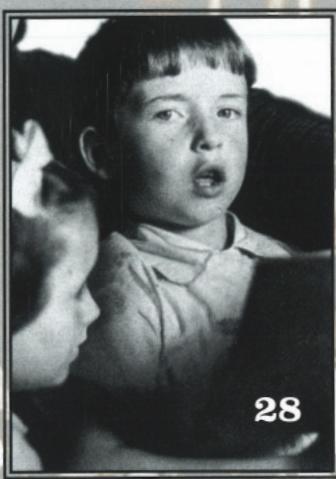
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MISSION STATEMENT

The National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers honors early and modern-day pioneers, both young and older, for their faith in God, devotion to family, loyalty to church and country, hard work, service to others, courage in adversity, personal integrity, and unyielding determination. Pioneer Magazine supports the mission of the Society.

COVER ART

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The Joy of Music

By Louis Pickett

As the years pass, I often think back on the happy times of my youth. In doing so I recall one of the fondest memories I have of my father. As the family would travel, whether in a horse-drawn wagon to and from the fields, or in the family automobile, he would spontaneously break forth in singing some of his favorite songs. One of these would invariably be "Barney Google." Even though I haven't heard the song for many years, I can still recall the nonsensical lyrics:

*Barney Google with the goo, goo,
 googly eye.
 Barney Google with a wife three
 times his size.
 She sued Barney for divorce. Now he's
 living with his horse.
 Barney Google with the goo, goo,
 googly eye.*

The songs my father sang were favorites from his youth and some that were probably sung by his father. Those songs have been passed down to my children with additional ones that were popular as I was growing up. Because we were a church-going family, it was natural that hymns were among the songs we sang as well. The practice of singing as a family as we work, play, and travel is consistent with the direction given by the First Presidency in the preface to the current Church hymnbook. They instruct us that "Ours is a hymnbook for the home as well as for the meetinghouse. We hope the hymnbook will take a prominent place among the scriptures and other religious books in our homes. The hymns can bring families a spirit of beauty and peace and can inspire love and unity among family members."

It is recorded that music was often present when the pioneers finished their labors of a long and arduous day on the trail. The song "Come, Come, Ye Saints" by William Clayton became a favorite that lifted their spirits, inspired them, and urged them on.

Several of the early members of the LDS church were prolific composers. Songs written by Parley P. Pratt, William W. Phelps, Eliza R. Snow, and others were also sung on the way to Zion. Some of those hymns such as "O My Father," "Now Let Us Rejoice," and "The Spirit of God" are among my favorites.

Music is one of the most effective ways to teach and to inspire. Hymns in particular deliver a powerful message and invite the Spirit. A well-remembered talk given by Elder Boyd K. Packer and published in the January 1974 *Ensign* gives a formula for removing bad or evil thoughts from our minds. He suggested that we memorize a favorite hymn that has uplifting words and reverent music. This hymn can be called forth any time a bad thought introduces itself in our mind. The lyrics of the hymn will push away and replace the bad thought.

Confucius believed that music and government go hand in hand and that music rises from the human heart. When the emotions are touched, they are often expressed in sounds, and when the sounds take definite forms, we have music. He believed that the country (and perhaps here we could add church and family) that develops the finest music, the grandest poetry, and the noblest moral ideals will always yield the greatest power in the world.

As the Sons of Utah Pioneers, we honor those noble men and women who, in addition to their many other contributions, left a legacy of fine music and high moral ideals to bless our lives today. ▼

Music is one of the most effective ways to teach and to inspire. Hymns in particular deliver a powerful message and invite the Spirit.

—L.P.

Louis Pickett participating in the Sugarhouse Chapter reenactment of delivery of the first cornerstone for the Salt Lake Temple.



"Oh, What Songs





Zion's Hymns

AS SUNG BY THE PIONEERS

By Richard H. Cracroft

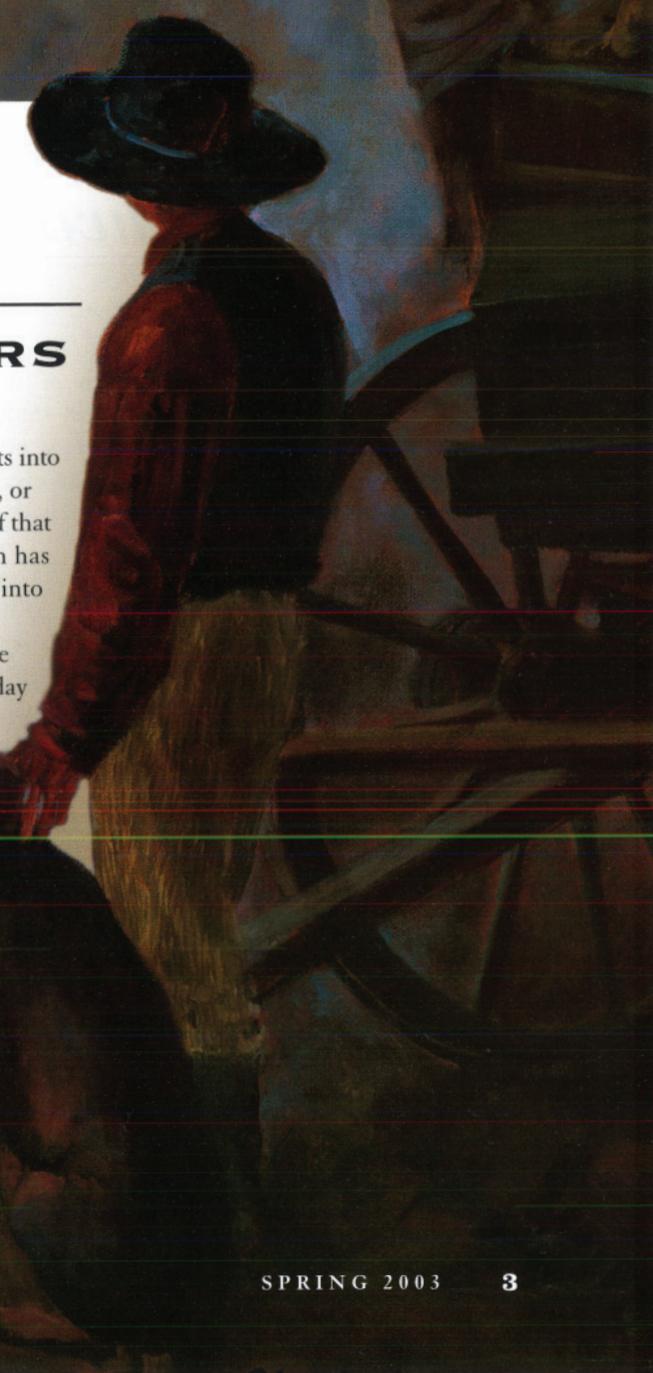
*"Oh, what songs of the heart
We shall sing all the day,
When again we assemble at home."¹*

The hymns of the Latter-day Saints have always been crucial to the spiritual expression of individual Saints as well as to the collective expressions of the Mormon people. Hymns—defined as sacred and spiritual “songs of the heart” addressed to deity—gladden the soul by enabling formal, lyrical expression of one’s profoundest spiritual feelings. But they also do much more, for hymns assist in organizing and interpreting LDS history,² framing LDS beliefs, and expressing LDS hopes, expectations, and ideals.³ Hymns, then, are vital in

transforming the Latter-day Saints into more than a sect, denomination, or church, for hymns provide part of that spiritual and cultural glue which has congealed the Latter-day Saints into a people. . . .

Nevertheless, it seems to me that, despite the affinity present-day Saints may feel with their forefather and fore-mother Saints, the hymns as sung by the Mormon pioneers meant something compellingly different to them than the same hymns mean to us or will mean to our great-grandchildren.

As this closer look



The impassioned lyrics of the hymns, set to soul-stirring music, organize and interpret LDS history and define the Latter-day Saints as a people.



All Is Well, © by Glen Hopkinson (2–3), used by permission. George Careless (4) © Utah State Historical Society.

at a handful of nineteenth-century LDS hymns of Zion makes clear, the men and women who pioneered and settled Utah Territory between 1847–1890 brought to these hymns a remarkably different perspective. . . . The impassioned lyrics of these hymns, set to soul-stirring music, resonated and reverberated within and among the pioneer Saints with an immediacy, pertinence, and anticipation regarding recent events, familiar circumstances, and imminent expectations.

The pioneer Saints hymned the events of the Restoration and the modern-day gathering of Israel; they heralded the imminent millennial reign of Jesus Christ; they cheered the restoration of the holy priesthood as part of the restoration of all things; they mourned their martyred prophet while being em-

powered by his witness; they prayed for freedom from oppression and persecution; they urged one another to keep the vision pure, to remain true to the faith; they sang of their Latter-day Saint doctrines and beliefs, from “work for the dead” and temple sealing for the living to consecration, tithing, the Word of Wisdom, and the plan of redemption and exaltation; they shouted praises for the newly revealed holy scriptures and continuing communications with the heavens; they sang of their duty to call on the inhabitants of Babylon to repent, be baptized, and flee to Zion; and above all, they praised the tender mercies of their God who had led his chosen Israel to Zion, “freedom’s last abode,” and they stood “all amazed” at the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

George Edward Percy Careless

By Janet Peterson

Named the “Chief Musician of the Church” by Brigham Young in 1865,¹ George Careless’s lasting influence is evidenced by the singing of his hymns every Sunday in a Latter-day Saint congregation somewhere in the world.

George Edward Percy Careless was born in London, England, 24 September 1839. Typical of working-class boys, George was apprenticed at a young age to learn a trade. His mentors not only taught him to make baskets and shoes but also shared their love of music; his basketmaker mentor was an organist who recognized George’s musical talent and his shoemaker mentor loaned him a violin, which George taught himself how to play.²

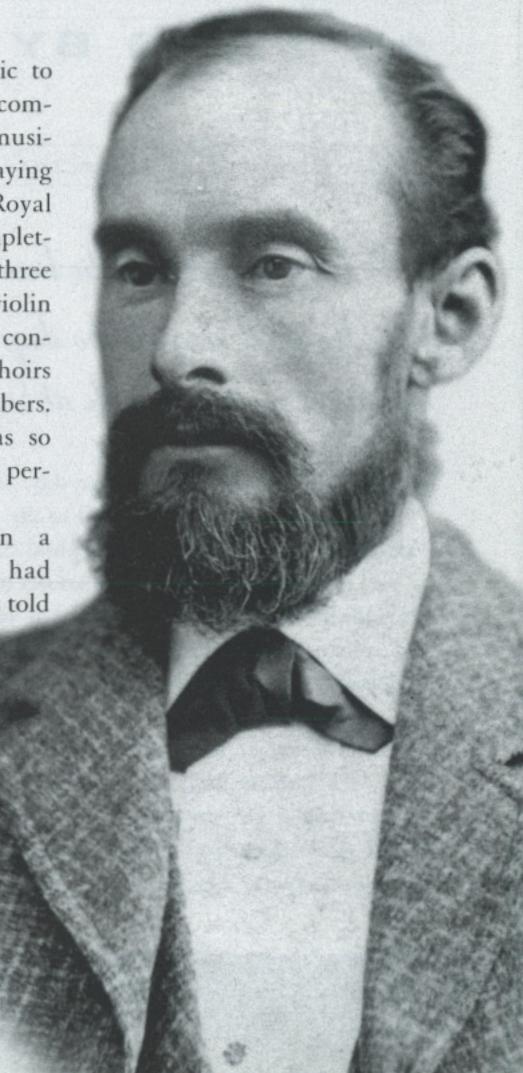
George had a beautiful soprano voice and was offered a place in a London choir school. This opportunity for a musical and academic education could have paved the way to a sure musical career,³ but George turned it down when he met missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and was baptized in 1850 at age eleven.

Two years later when his father de-

manded that George give up music to learn a secure trade, George was compelled to leave home to pursue his musical training. He earned money playing the violin and attended the Royal Academy of Music in London, completing the four-year course in only three years. Professionally, he played the violin in London orchestras led by noted conductors. He also directed Church choirs and gave concerts for Church members. His London Conference Choir was so outstanding that they were invited to perform in various concert halls.

George’s life changed when a missionary related a dream he had about George. Elder William Staines told George that he “was wanted in Zion.” Obedient, George quickly made the decision to emigrate and departed for America in June 1864.⁴

An often-told story about George’s journey is of his organizing a choir



PERENNIAL FAVORITES, DIFFERING WORLDS

An examination of the perennially popular Mormon hymns "The Morning Breaks," "Redeemer of Israel," "The Spirit of God," "O My Father," "Praise to the Man," and "Come, Come, Ye Saints" makes evident that Mormon hymns reveal not only the pioneer Saints' exultation in their restored theology, but also their strong faith and remarkable confidence in the inevitable triumph of the kingdom of God and their collective vision of themselves as God's chosen Israel.

"THE MORNING BREAKS"

Written by Parley P. Pratt (1840) and set to the tune "Hudson," composed by Mormon convert George Edward Percy Careless

(1864), "The Morning Breaks" expresses in moving lyrics Mormon joy at the recent Restoration of the gospel. It stirs the heart of the convert and helps keep vivid among the Saints God's "strange act" (Isa. 28:21) in leading, individually and collectively, the children of the promise out of obscurity and sin into salvation and righteousness:

*The morning breaks, the shadows flee;
Lo, Zion's standard is unfurled!
The dawning of a brighter day
Majestic rises on the world.
.....
Thus Zion's light is bursting forth
To bring her ransomed children home.⁴*

We sing these words with fervor but not with quite the same fervor of men and

on board the *Hudson* as he sailed to America. Not only did singing buoy up the Latter-day Saint passengers, it impressed the captain. As the ship docked in New York, the captain said to George, "I have admired your music so much that I want you to give me one of your tunes, as my family is religious and likes to sing hymns on Sunday evening." George responded that he couldn't give one to the captain as his music was packed and neither did he have any paper on which to write. The captain produced some paper, and George wrote music for Parley P. Pratt's text "The Morning Breaks, The Shadows Flee." He then led the ship choir in singing it to the captain.⁵

The trek to Utah was difficult, and when George's group finally arrived in November 1864, he was very ill and near starvation. Upon arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, he was further disheartened to learn that there were enough music teachers already. However, he secured students who usually paid him in kind.⁶

In 1865, Brigham Young called George on a music mission to lead the Tabernacle Choir and the Salt Lake Theatre Orchestra. As director of both musical groups (not always concurrently), George wrote much of the music they performed. He organized the Careless Concert Orchestra and the Careless Opera Company, which performed Handel's *Messiah* and the new operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan.⁷

One of his significant contributions was publishing *The Utah Musical Times* with David O. Calder. In each issue, they published new hymn settings since they felt that unique Church doctrines warranted new music.⁸ Church members had been singing hymn texts to folk tunes and well-known Christian hymns, and previous Church hymn collections only included texts.

George retired as conductor of the Tabernacle Choir in 1880. A few years later, he served on the Church Music Committee to produce the first hymnal to include text and music, *The Latter-day Saints' Psalmody*. George's first wife, Lavinia Triplett Careless, was a fine singer, who soloed in the *Messiah*. She died in 1885, and several years later, George married Jane Davis. George died in Salt Lake City, 16 December 1932.

Nine of his more than eighty hymns are included in the current hymnal:

- "The Morning Breaks"
- "Arise, O Glorious Zion"
- "Though Deepening Trials"
- "Prayer Is the Soul's Sincere Desire"
- "O Thou Kind and Gracious Father"
- "O Lord of Hosts"
- "Again We Meet Around the Board" (*composer*)
- "Behold the Great Redeemer Die" (*composer*)
- "He Died! The Great Redeemer Died" (*composer*) ▼

Notes

¹ Gerald L. Homer, "George Careless," in *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History*, ed. Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 188.

² David Maxwell, "'The Morning Breaks': George Careless, Musical Pioneer," *Ensign*, Feb. 1984, 47.

³ Jane McBride Choate, "George Careless, Music Missionary," *Friend*, Sept. 1996, 46.

⁴ George D. Pyper, "In Intimate Touch with Professor George Careless," *Juvenile Instructor* 59 (1924), 116.

⁵ J. Spencer Cornwall, *Stories of Our Mormon Hymns* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 265.

⁶ Maxwell, 48.

⁷ Homer, 189.

⁸ Maxwell, 50.



women who have
laid their all on the
altars of a brand-new Zion.

"REDEEMER OF ISRAEL"

The Saints' vibrant optimism, confidence, and gratitude to the Father for touching common lives, all expressed in "The Morning Breaks," are likewise evident in "Redeemer of Israel." Written by W. W. Phelps, the hymn first appeared in 1832 in *The Evening and the Morning Star*, a Jackson County, Missouri, LDS newspaper. This adaptation of Joseph Swain's "Oh Thou, in Whose Presence My Soul Takes Delight" underscores the concerns of the Saints with recent mob oppression in Jackson County, persecution to which Phelps and his printing press had fallen prey. As with other hymns, however, this hymn is layered with Mormon history, incorporating as it does new meanings arising from the later persecutions of the Saints—the hostilities in Missouri and

Nauvoo, the forced exodus into the Mountain West, the U.S. military invasion in the Utah War of 1857–1858, and the 1874–1890 polygamy raids on Mormon Zion by the U.S. government. Note in the second and third verses the multiple layers of meaning as they would occur to Saints fleeing the latest persecution:

*We know he is coming
To gather his sheep
And lead them to Zion in love,
For why in the valley
Of death should they weep
Or in the lone wilderness rove?*

*How long we have wandered
As strangers in sin,
And cried in the desert for thee!
Our foes have rejoiced
When our sorrows they've seen,
But Israel will shortly be free.*

Photo of hymnals © by Scott Tanner (6–7). Used by permission, all rights reserved.

Typically, the Saints end the hymn with this confident rallying cry in the fourth verse:

*Fear not, and be just,
For the kingdom is ours.
The hour of redemption
is near.⁶ . . .*

"PRAISE TO THE MAN"

The assassination of the Prophet Joseph Smith Jr. and his brother Hyrum on June 27, 1844, immediately spawned a number of hymns in honor of the murdered prophet, thereby introducing a new theme into Mormon hymnody. Of these hymns in honor of the Prophet Joseph, the most popular continues to be "Praise to the Man," by W. W. Phelps.⁷ The wrathful line in the second verse that formerly read, "Long shall his blood, which was shed by assassins, / Stain Illinois while the earth lauds his fame," was gentled in the 1927 hymnal to "Plead unto heav'n, while the earth lauds his fame."⁸ The original wording of that line, along with the tone of the hymn, reflects an immediacy and a personal and group pain that present-day Saints, while sympathetic, may not fully comprehend.

Written and published within a few weeks of Joseph's death, the hymn recounts recent events in Mormon history, reveals something of the in-your-face belligerence that characterized the Gentile-Mormon conflict and makes clear the determination of the harried and harassed Saints to press on despite the loss of their prophet. They sound their confidence in the eventual triumphant day when, "mark our words," they seem to say, "millions shall know 'Brother Joseph' again."

The hymn was originally sung as a dirge, slowly and mournfully, to the tune "A Star in the East," rediscovered in the 1950s by the Ames Brothers and recorded in their

best-selling "My Bonnie Lassie." The hymn enabled pioneer Saints not only to mourn their fallen leader, but also to use any occasion of its singing to testify to those who "knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1:8) of his prophetic virtues and divine calling. Whether or not "millions" would know Brother Joseph again, thousands of Saints who had known him well would bring to the hymn the immediacy and grief arising from firsthand acquaintance with the murdered prophet—emotions not as possible 150 years after the tragedy at Carthage. . . .

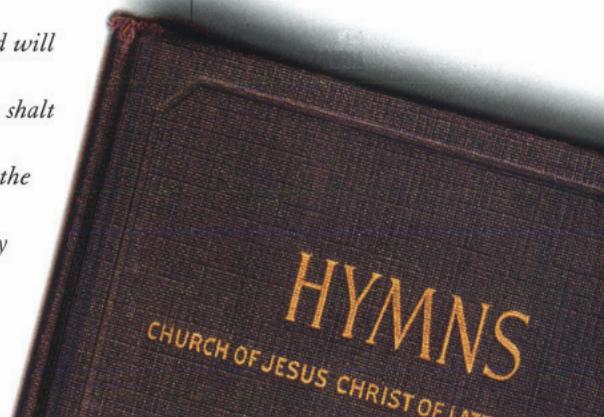
REJOICING IN ZION

At the heart of the Mormon hymns is Zion and an intense longing for a refuge at once tangible and spiritual. Even before the Latter-day Saints fled to the Rocky Mountains, the idea of Zion was firmly fixed in their imaginations. Present-day Saints are hard pressed to comprehend what it meant to put down one's roots at last in the Zion of God and raise one's voice in praise to God for the security of "our mountain home so dear."⁹ As children of Israel, the Saints planted their ensign on Ensign Peak (Mt. Zion) and thereby took part in fulfilling the prophecies of Isaiah. In the music of Ebenezer Beesley and the words of Joel Hills Johnson, they sang from their valleys in the Wasatch while looking up to towering, sheltering mountains:

*High on the mountain top
A banner is unfurled.
Ye nations, now look up;
It waves to all the world.
In Deseret's sweet, peaceful land,
On Zion's mount behold it stand!¹⁰*

Weary with their settle-plant-and-flee existence, the pioneer Saints sang, no doubt with a different kind of fervor and with greater relief than contemporary Saints can muster, Charles Penrose's "O Ye Mountains High":

*In thy mountain retreat, God will
strengthen thy feet;
Without fear of thy foes thou shalt
tread;
And their silver and gold, as the
prophets have told,
Shall be brought to adorn thy
fair head.*



The hymn
“For the
Strength
of the Hills”
lyrically
expresses the
feelings of
the Saints now
in Zion “brought
from many
lands,” to the
“valley’s fertile
sod. . . .”

—J. D. C.

Praising the mountain retreat, “sacred home of the prophets of God” with its “vales of the free,” President Penrose, who had himself made the trek from England to Utah and eventually held a position in the First Presidency, reminds the Saints of the first Zion:

*O Zion! dear Zion! home of the free,
Tho thou wert forced to fly to thy
chambers on high,
Yet we'll share joy and sorrow with thee.¹¹*

Perhaps no other hymn so lyrically expresses the feelings of the Saints about Zion than “For the Strength of the Hills,” wonderfully adapted from English poet Felicia D. Hermans by Edward L. Sloan to fit like a glove the history and circumstances of the Saints:

*For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God;
Thou hast made thy children mighty
By the touch of the mountain sod.
Thou hast led thy chosen Israel
To freedom's last abode;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God.*

*At the hands of foul oppressors,
We've bourne and suffered long;
Thou hast been our help in weakness,
And thy pow'r hath made us strong.*

*Amid ruthless foes outnumbered,
In weariness we trod;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God.*

*Thou hast led us here in safety
Where the mountain bulwark stands
As the guardian of the loved ones
Thou hast brought from many lands.
For the rock and for the river,
The valley's fertile sod,
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God.¹² . . .*

HYMN FROM THE UTAH WAR

After ten years of being left alone in the mountains, by which time the Saints were able to put down permanent roots, encroachment began. On July 24, 1857, as the Saints celebrated in Big Cottonwood Canyon their

tenth anniversary of arriving in Utah, they were informed by Abraham O. Smoot and Porter Rockwell that the U.S. Army was on the march to invade and put down rebellion in Utah Territory: the Saints were at war with the United States, and the Utah War of 1857–58 was on. President Young recalled the missionaries, recalled the settlers from the perimeters of the territory, and put the Saints on war footing.

Local squads of the Nauvoo Legion drilled and paraded through the centers of Utah's villages and hamlets; the local contingent of Pitt's Brass Band paraded up and down the square—if they had one; and they all sang “Up, Awake, Ye Defenders of Zion,” another hymn by Englishman Charles W. Penrose and the rallying war song of the Utah War, sung to the tune of “The Red, White, and Blue.” Note in the hymn the specific references to atrocities against the Mormons, and pay special attention to both the fierce wording applied to the federal troops and the treasonous words of the last stanza, in which Penrose proclaims, “Soon ‘the Kingdom’ will be independent.” I show in brackets the gentling emendations of the 1985 hymnal:

(1857 version, as printed in 1863)
(1985 redaction)

*Us, awake, ye defenders
of Zion!
The foe's at the door of
your homes;
Let each heart be the
heart of a lion,
Unyielding and proud as
he roams.
Remember the wrongs
of Missouri;
[trial of Missouri]
Forget not the fate of
Nauvoo.
[the courage of Nauvoo]
When the God-hating
foe is before ye,
[the enemy host is . . .]
Stand firm, and be
faithful and true.
[Chorus added using last
two lines of each verse]*

*The Bugle Corps of Johnston's Army,
Camp Floyd (9) © Utah State
Historical Society.*

*By the mountains our Zion's surrounded;
[By His power is Zion . . .]
Her warriors are noble and brave,
And their faith on Jehovah is founded,
Whose power is mighty to save.
Opposed by a proud, boasting nation
[In each soldier a brave heart is beating]
Their numbers, compared, may be few,
[Tho' our]
But their union is known through
creation,
[We'll not rest till our foes are retreating]
And they've always been faithful and true!*

*Shall we bear with oppression forever?
[Entire verse omitted]
Shall we tamely submit to the foe,
While the ties of our kindred they sever?
Shall the blood of the prophets still flow?
No! The thought sets the heart wildly
beating;
Our vows, at each pulse we renew,
Ne'er to rest till our foes are retreating,
While we remain faithful and true!*

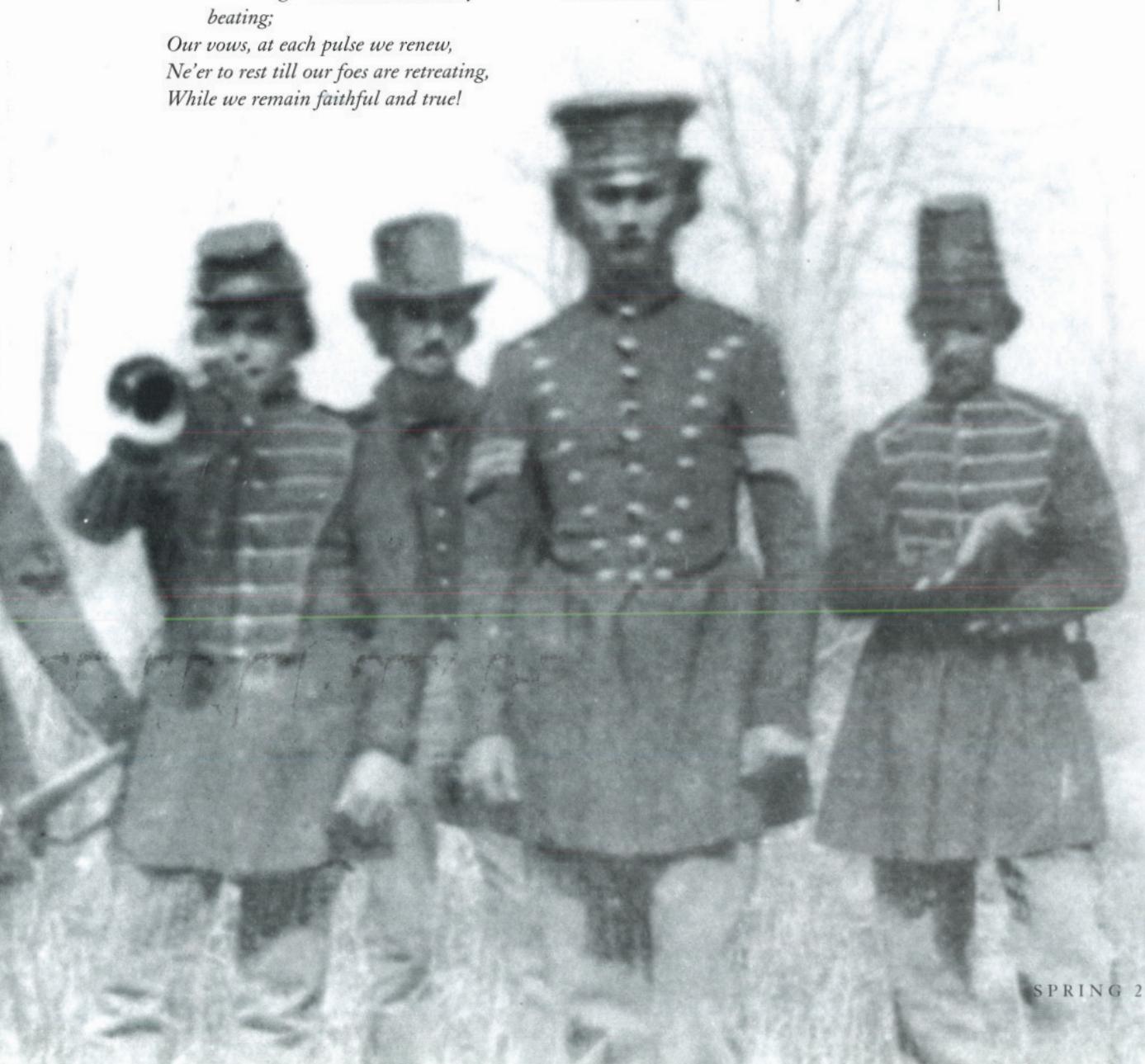
*Though, assisted by legions infernal,
The plundering wretches advance,
[plundering foemen]
With a host from the regions eternal,
We'll scatter their hosts at a glance!
Soon "the Kingdom" will be independent;
In wonder the nations will view
The despised ones in glory resplendent;
[Our Zion in . . .]
Then let us be faithful and true! ¹³ . . .*

SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMNS

The Deseret Sunday School Union had an incalculable influence on the hymning of the Latter-day Saints. The Sunday School hymn reflected a sea-change in Mormon hymnody made necessary by the rising generation of errant or straying youth who "knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1:8) or Brigham and who had not been called upon to sacrifice for

The local contingent of Pitt's Brass Band paraded up and down the square. . . . and they all sang "Up, Awake, Ye Defenders of Zion," . . . the rallying war song of the Utah War, sung to the tune of "The Red, White, and Blue."

WILLIAM G. HARRIS



light, Lord is my light, He is my joy He is my joy and my song, and my song, By

Richard Ballantyne
organized the first
Sunday School in 1849
(depicted below).

day and by night, by

the kingdom of God. In teaching the youth of Zion to "choose the right,"¹⁴ to live righteous lives, the hymn became an aid in teaching Latter-day Saint values and lifestyle as well as theology. While present-day Saints can identify with numerous teachings in the hymns, many members distance themselves from certain quaint, outdated, and often unintentionally humorous hymns.

The Sunday School, formally established by the Church in 1866, featured, for the next century, weekly hymn practice, which included churchwide

teaching of a hymn of the month, often newly minted. The new hymn would be published along with other new hymns in the *Juvenile Instructor*, also founded in 1866 as the official publication of the Deseret Sunday School Union Board. The Sunday School not only placed the didactic hymn at stage center for much of the pioneering and settlement era but also stimulated the writing of hymns throughout the Church.

The fervor of the call to attend Sunday School, held at ten each Sabbath morning (sacrament meeting usually being held at seven each Sunday evening), is seen in the



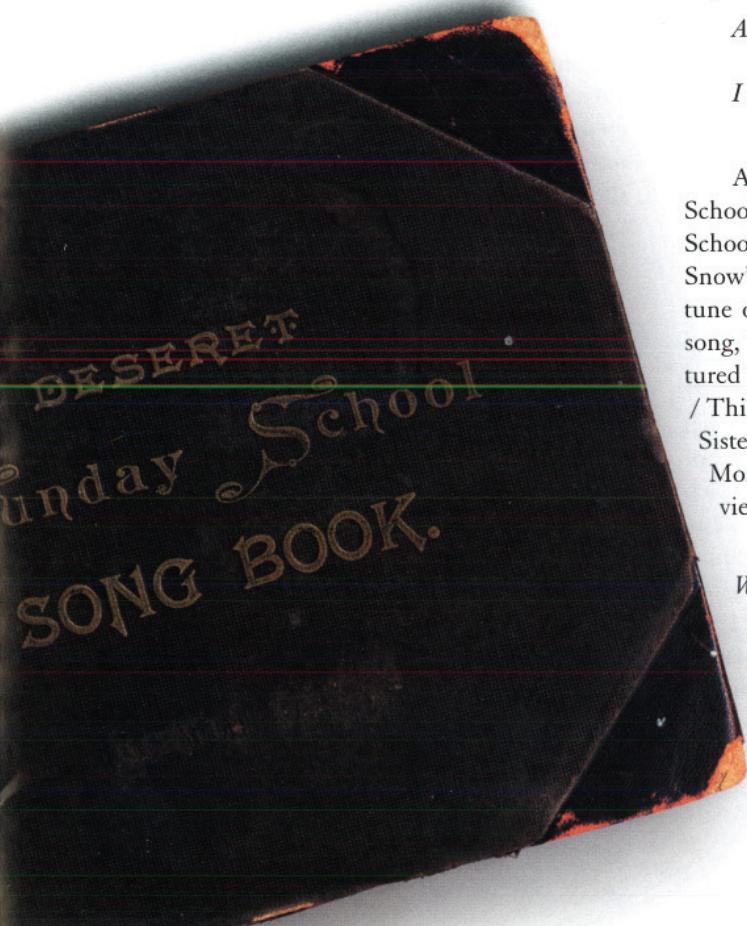
ver - y queer I feel, That now I've made my bow, I fear I don't look quite genteel;
mong these mountains high, Where I've been taught to love the truth, And scorn to tell a lie;
ust all the good I can.

several somewhat-dated Sunday School songs still included in the 1985 hymnbook: "Welcome, Welcome, Sabbath Morning," "Thanks for the Sabbath School," "We Meet Again in Sabbath School," and "Come Away to the Sunday School." Gone forever is "Never Be Late," one of the favorite but timeworn Sunday School hymns of the settlement era:

*Never be late to the Sunday School class,
Come with your bright sunny faces;
Cheering your teachers and pleasing
your God—*

*Always be found in your places.
Never be late, never be late;
Children remember the warning:
Try to be there, always be there
Promptly at ten in the morning.¹⁵*

Joseph L. Townsend and William Clayson, two Sunday School workers in Payson, Utah Valley, teamed up to write dozens of Sunday School hymns. To their stirring hymns, many of them militant and martial, such as "Hope of Israel" and "O Thou Rock of Our Salvation," the Deseret Sunday School Union added such hymns of moral uplift and caution as "Scatter Sunshine," "There Is Sunshine in My Soul Today," and "I'll Be a Sunbeam for Jesus."



President Spencer W. Kimball would recall with pleasure a sentimental bit of doggerel, "Don't Kill the Birds," which he had learned in Sunday School nearly eight decades earlier as a child on the Arizona Mormon frontier. Though the hymn was long ago dropped from the hymnal and may have made little impression on others, its admonitions deeply and personally impressed young Spencer and later influenced his adult attitudes about the environment and human stewardship:

*Don't kill the little birds, that sing on
bush and tree,
All thro' the summer days, their
sweetest melody.
Don't shoot the little birds! The
earth is God's estate,
And He provideth food for small as
well as great.¹⁶*

Similarly, Mormon boys up and down the settlements learned and sang, often in Sunday School opening exercises, in soprano or falsetto, Evan Stephen's "A 'Mormon' Boy." The hymn became a part of those youths' lives, and they never forgot the experience of singing their righteous pride at being Latter-day Saint boys destined to enjoy, as deacons, more priesthood power "than the Pope at Rome":

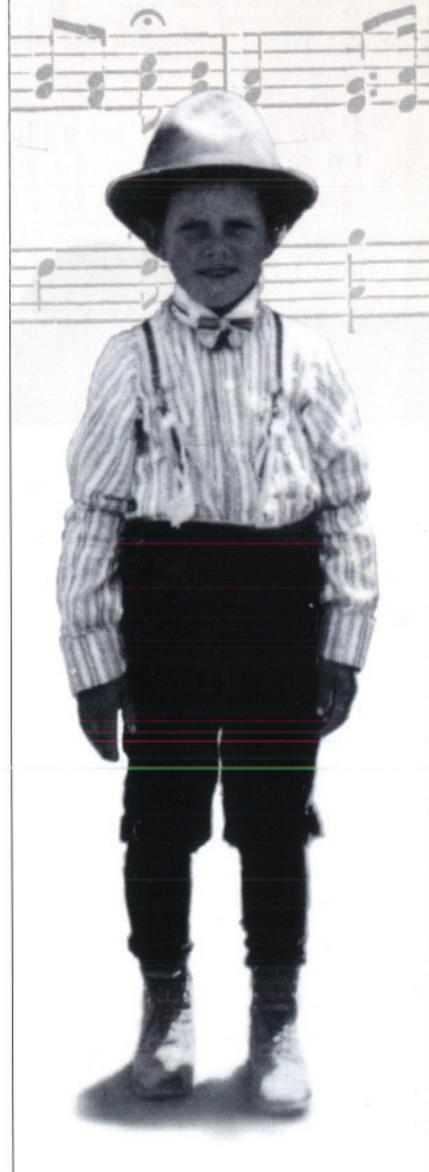
*A "Mormon" boy, a "Mormon" boy,
I am a "Mormon" boy.
I might be envied by a king, For
I am a "Mormon" boy.¹⁷*

Another of the frequently sung Sunday School hymns to come from the early Sunday Schools and Primary associations is Eliza R. Snow's "In Our Lovely Deseret," set to the tune of George F. Root's popular Civil War song, "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp," about a captured Union soldier—"In my prison cell I sit / Thinking, Mother dear, of you"¹⁸—which Sister Snow transformed into a distinctively Mormon hymn, now dated by its parochial views:

*In our lovely Deseret,
Where the Saints of God have met,
There's a multitude of children
all around.
They are generous and brave;
They have precious souls to save;
They must listen and obey the
gospel's sound.*

As a child
on the
Arizona
Mormon frontier,
Spencer W.
Kimball (below)
sang a senti-
mental song
"Don't Kill the
Birds," which he
had learned in
Sunday School.

ort of chap—An honest "Mormon" that's a fault Of many a "Mormon" head and say, I am a "Mormon"



In 1845, still grieving over Joseph Smith's death and contemplating his teachings, Eliza wrote her most beloved hymn, "O My Father" with the gold pencil Joseph had given her.

—J. Peterson

Chorus: Hark! hark! hark! 'tis children's music—

*Children's voices, oh, how sweet,
When in innocence and love,
Like the angels up above,
They with happy hearts and cheerful
faces meet.*

*That the children may live long
And be beautiful and strong,
Tea and coffee and tobacco they despise,
Drink no liquor, and they eat
But a very little meat;
They are seeking to be great and good
and wise.¹⁹ . . .*

As the century waned, the pioneers grew older, the settlements became towns and cities, the influence of the East encroached, and Zion was threatened with increasing inactivity among the young people. Attempting to interest and activate a flagging youth, the Sunday School began publishing, late in the century, hymns like "True to the Faith" by Evan Stephens.²⁰ The congregation would pledge to be "true to the faith that our parents have cherished, / True to the truths for which martyrs have perished" and, in

another popular Sunday School hymn, would stand up to declare themselves in singing "Who's on the Lord's side? Who?"

As we have seen, the hymns of the pioneer Saints spoke directly to them in tones, accents, and images that described their daily lives, recent history, tribulations as a people, and their faith in God. Hymns helped the Mormon pioneers to see themselves as children of God who were hard at work fulfilling ancient prophecy, building Zion, and making meaningful sacrifices for the kingdom of God. In a way peculiar to their times and seasons, the Mormon pioneers gleaned strength and courage, resilience and tenacity from the association-laden hymns. Their vision renewed by their worship services, of which hymns were a part, they returned to their homes to fight the good fight, stave off the latest drought, dig yet another well, plant a promising crop, and "hold to the rod, the iron rod."²¹ Somehow, singing their hymns, their songs of the heart, helped bring their Zion cause, their people's turbulent past, their formidable present, and their visionary destiny into saintly focus and enabled them,

Eliza R. Snow

By Janet Peterson

The Prophet Joseph Smith often referred to Eliza R. Snow as "Zion's poetess." When she joined the Church in 1835, she was already a nationally recognized poet. After her baptism, she redirected her writing talents to uplift the Saints and to teach the doctrines of the gospel.

Eliza Roxey Snow was born to a religious family on 21 January 1804, in Becket, Massachusetts. Her family was living in Mantua, Ohio, a town close to Kirtland, when they learned of The Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.¹ Eliza's response to the gospel message was "It was what my soul hungered for, but . . . I considered it a hoax—too good to be true."² She introduced her brother Lorenzo, to whom she was especially close, to the Church. He later served as the fifth President of the Church.

Eliza taught school to Joseph and Emma's children and boarded in their home in Kirtland. She contributed two hymns to the hymnal that Emma Smith compiled and published in 1835.³

The Snow family moved to Missouri with the Saints and then were part of the forced exodus to Nauvoo. There Eliza again taught school in the Prophet's home and wrote poetry and hymns that were published in Nauvoo journals.

Eliza was appointed secretary of the Relief Society at its organizational meeting on 17 March 1842. She was a strong and influential leader of women from that point until her death. When the Relief Society was

once more, to make their chorus swell, "All is well! All is well!" ▼

*This article originally appeared in full in the book *Nearly Everything Imaginable: The Everyday Life of Utah's Mormon Pioneers, (137–55)*, edited by Ronald W. Walker and Doris R. Dant (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, BYU Studies, 1999).*

Notes

1 "Oh, What Songs of the Heart," in *Hymns of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985)*, no. 286 (hereafter cited as *Hymns*).

2 For example, "Joseph Smith's First Prayer," in *Hymns*, no. 26.

3 See also Mary D. Poulter, "Doctrines of Faith and Hope Found in Emma Smith's 1835 Hymnbook," *BYU Studies* 37, no. 2 (1997–98): 32–56.

4 *Hymns*, no. 1.

5 George D. Pyper, *Stories of Latter-day Saint Hymns (Salt Lake City: Deseret New Press, 1939)*, 96.

6 *Hymns*, no. 6.

7 Pyper, *Stories of Latter-day Saint Hymns*, 97–100.

8 Karen Lynn Davidson, *Our Latter-day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988)*, 55–56.

9 *Hymns*, no. 33.

10 *Hymns*, no. 5.

11 *Hymns*, no. 34; *Deseret News 1997–98 Church Almanac (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1996)*, 44.

12 *Hymns*, no. 35.

13 *Hymns*, no. 248; Davidson, *Our Latter-day Hymns*, 255. The hymnal in which this song first appeared is *Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 12th ed. rev. (Liverpool: George Q. Cannon, 1863)*, 73–74.

14 *Hymns*, no. 239.

15 *Deseret Sunday School Song Book: A Collection of Choice Pieces for the Use of Sunday Schools, and Suitable for Other Occasions, 3d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1899)*, 158.

16 *Deseret Sunday School Song Book, 6th ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1907)*, 185; Spencer W. Kimball, "Strengthening the Family—the Basic Unit of the Church," *Ensign (May 1978)*: 47–48.

17 *Deseret Sunday School Song Book*, 122–24.

18 Davidson, *Our Latter-day Hymns*, 307.

19 *Hymns*, no. 307.

20 *Hymns*, no. 254.

21 *Hymns*, no. 274.



Richard Ballantyne Organizes First Sunday School, by Arnold Friberg (10); Young Spencer Kimball (11) © by Intellectual Reserve Inc. Eliza R. Snow (12) © by Intellectual Reserve Inc., courtesy Museum of Church History and Art. Deseret Sunday School Song Book and page of music (10–11) © Utah State Historical Society.

reorganized in Utah in 1866, Eliza was called as its second president. She assisted bishops in organizing Relief Societies in wards throughout the Territory, instructed the sisters, and oversaw such endeavors as the grain storage program, the silk enterprise, and ordinance work in the Endowment House.⁴ Seeking to improve medical care, she served as president of the Deseret Hospital.⁵ Until 1880 when separate presidencies were called, Eliza headed the Retrenchment and the Primary associations.

Eliza became a plural wife of the Prophet Joseph in 1842, and after his martyrdom was married to Brigham Young. She lived in the Lion House in Salt Lake City with the extensive Young family and continued to write poetry and hymns, such as "In Our Lovely Deseret," "How Great the Wisdom and the Love," and "Though Deepening Trials."

Eliza's dearest friend, Zina D. Huntington, also a plural wife of Joseph, had lost her mother and mourned deeply. When

Zina asked the Prophet if she would know her mother in the world beyond, he "responded emphatically, 'Yes, you will know your mother there.'" In 1845, still grieving over Joseph's death and contemplating his teachings, Eliza wrote her most beloved hymn, "O My Father" with the gold pencil Joseph had given her. The hymn was sung to many different tunes but is most familiar in its current setting by James McGranahan.

Eliza Roxcy Snow Smith Young died 5 December 1887, in Salt Lake City.

In the current hymnal are ten of Eliza's hymn texts:

- "Awake, Ye Saints of God"
- "Great Is the Lord"
- "Though Deepening Trials"
- "Again We Meet Around the Board" (*lyricist*)
- "Behold the Great Redeemer Die" (*lyricist*)
- "How Great the Wisdom and the Love"
- "The Time Is Far Spent"
- "Truth Reflects upon Our Senses"
- "O My Father"
- "In Our Lovely Deseret" ▼

Notes

1 "Eliza R. Snow," in Janet Peterson and LaRene Gaunt, *Elect Ladies: Presidents of the Relief Society (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990)*, 24–27.

2 "Eliza R. Snow: An Immortal" (*Salt Lake City: Nicholas G. Morgan Sr. Foundation, 1957*), 4.

3 Jill Mulvay Derr, "Eliza R. Snow," in *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History*, ed. Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan (*Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000*), 1148.

4 Derr, 1150.

5 Peterson and Gaunt, 40.

6 Latter-day Saints' Psalmody, quoted in Karen Lynn Davidson, *Our Latter-day Saint Hymns: The Stories and the Messages (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988)*, 294.

Emma's Collection of Sacred Hymns

A Legacy of Musical Expression in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times

*"For my soul
delighteth in
the song of the
heart; yea, the
song of the
righteous is a
prayer unto
me, and it
shall be
answered with
a blessing upon
their heads."*

—D&C 25:12

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was not yet five months old when, in July 1830, the Lord directed Emma Smith, wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith, to compile a collection of sacred hymns for use in the Church.

Emma was well suited to the assignment. Raised in a devoutly religious family, she was familiar with the concept of worship through music, and she was well grounded in basic biblical understanding. She was also familiar with the concepts that were being revealed through her prophet husband, as she served as his scribe from time to time.

Emma was told in the revelation given at Harmony, Pennsylvania, "It shall be given thee . . . to make a selection of sacred hymns, as it shall be given thee, which is pleasing unto me, to be had in my church. For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads" (D&C 25:11–12).

Emma undoubtedly took this assignment to heart and began

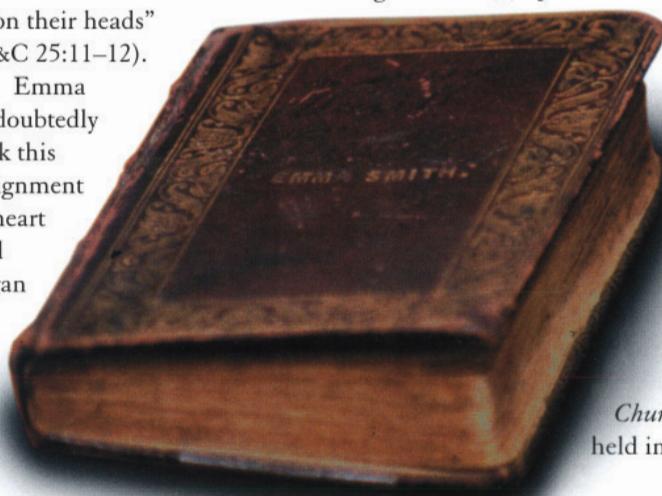
from that time on to collect suitable hymns. We have no specific statement from her concerning this process, but we conclude, from studying the collection she eventually made, that she selected words and music from the hymnals of the day and gleaned text from many sources.

The hymnal was published by F. G. Williams Co., in 1835, at Kirtland, Ohio. Between the time she was asked to make the compilation, and the eventual production of her tiny volume of ninety hymns almost five years later, the Smiths underwent many severe difficulties.

Joseph and Emma moved from Pennsylvania to Ohio in January 1831. There they suffered the loss of their twin babies, Thaddeus and Louisa. They adopted the Murdock twins, Joseph and Julia. Then, sadly, they lost the little boy.

In November, Emma gave birth to little Joseph Smith III, in Kirtland. Joseph was frequently away on Church business, leaving Emma to cope with two busy little children, and a house full of boarders, while living in makeshift quarters above the Whitney Store.

Although it was a difficult and trying time, it is evident that she accomplished something on the project, since, according to *History of the Church*, during a council meeting held in Independence, Missouri, on



tion



It was decided on 14 September 1835 that Sister Emma Smith proceed to make a selection of sacred hymns, and that President W. W. Phelps be appointed to revise and arrange them for printing.

W. W. Phelps

1 May 1832, "It was . . . ordered that W. W. Phelps correct and print the hymns which had been selected by Emma Smith in fulfillment of the revelation."¹

One month later, the first issue of *The Evening and The Morning Star* was published in Independence, Missouri. Along with news articles and revelations, it contained the words to six hymns. Each month thereafter, more hymns were printed. By the fall of 1833, about twenty hymns had been printed in the *Star*. The work of printing and binding The Book of Commandments was then underway. In November 1833, a violent mob laid siege to the printing office destroying the press and most of the printed materials. Only a small part of the sheets for The Book of Commandments were saved, when some children bravely gathered as many as they could and carried them to safety. Whether a bound hymnal had been in the works at that time is not known. If it was, it too was destroyed. Certainly, all of the preliminary effort that had gone toward preparing

Emma's collection was lost. W. W. Phelps's printing business was utterly destroyed.

The Evening and The Morning Star moved its labors to Kirtland, where it resumed publication under the F. G. Williams Co., with Oliver Cowdery serving as editor. We have no way of knowing if Emma had any particular input concerning the inclusion of hymns in the later issues of the *Star*. However, we may assume that many, if not all, of the hymns published in the early issues were from her original collection.

Using the Church newspapers to provide the Saints with access to at least some of the hymns was woefully inadequate. Finally, by the fall of 1835, the Church was in a position to make another attempt at publishing the Prophet Joseph's revelations, and the sacred hymns Emma had collected. *History of the Church* records that on 14 September 1835, in a meeting of the High Council and the presidency at Kirtland, "it was decided that Sister Emma Smith proceed to make a selection of sacred Hymns,

W. W. Phelps

By Janet Peterson

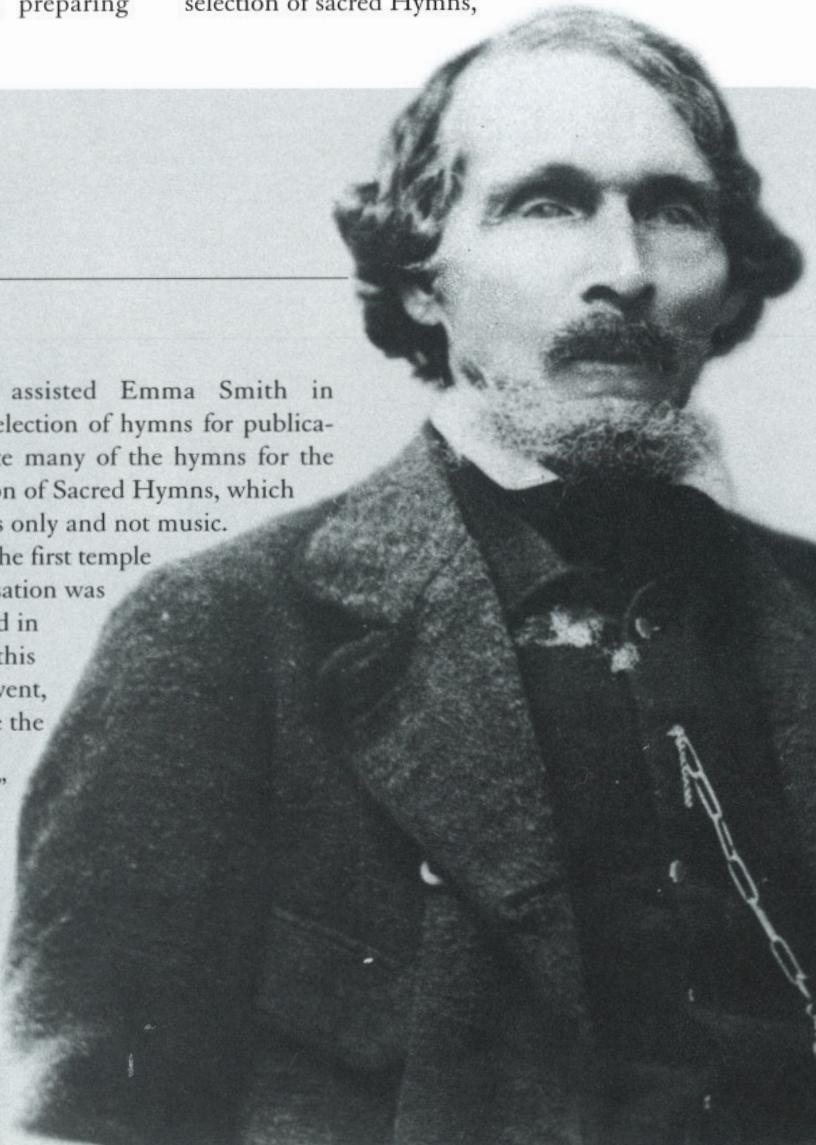
Among W. W. Phelps's many important contributions to the building of the kingdom was his writing the words to "The Spirit of God" and "Praise to the Man," as well as numerous other hymns.

William Wines Phelps was born in Hanover, New Jersey, 17 February 1792, the eldest of twelve children. He was educated in New Jersey and married Sally Waterman in 1815. He later took several plural wives.

After William bought a copy of the Book of Mormon from Parley P. Pratt, he traveled to Kirtland, Ohio, to meet the Prophet Joseph Smith. Doctrine and Covenants section 55 is a revelation to W. W. Phelps from the Lord commanding him to be baptized, which he was in 1831. He was also instructed to write and print books to educate children.

William assisted Emma Smith in preparing a selection of hymns for publication. He wrote many of the hymns for the 1835 Collection of Sacred Hymns, which included texts only and not music.

In 1836, the first temple of this dispensation was to be dedicated in Kirtland. For this momentous event, William wrote the anthem "The Spirit of God," which was sung following Joseph's offering of the dedicatory prayer.



according to the revelation; [as given in 1830] and that President W. W. Phelps be appointed to revise and arrange them for printing.”²

We are not informed what role Emma played in the final preparations for publication, but we presume, that having been given the commission to make the selection, she was probably involved to some extent in regard to the order in which the hymns were set. It seems very appropriate that the first hymn in this volume is “Know this, that every soul is free to choose his life and what he’ll be.” The final hymn in the book was a new hymn written by W. W. Phelps, “The Spirit of God, Like a Fire is Burning.”

The small volume, about three by four inches contains words only. The Community of Christ (formerly the RLDS church) choir in Independence, Missouri, presents their rendition of Emma’s hymns a cappella. It is possible, even probable, that the Saints had a harpsichord, or even a pump organ, for accompaniment in congregational and choir singing.

“The Spirit of God” is sung at every temple dedication, accompanied by the “Hosanna Shout.”

W. W. Phelps edited *The Evening and The Morning Star*, published the Book of Commandments, assisted in compiling the Doctrine and Covenants, served as Joseph’s scribe in translating the book of Abraham, donated money for the building of the Kirtland Temple, served as a counselor in the first stake in Missouri, and held a seat on the Nauvoo City Council.¹

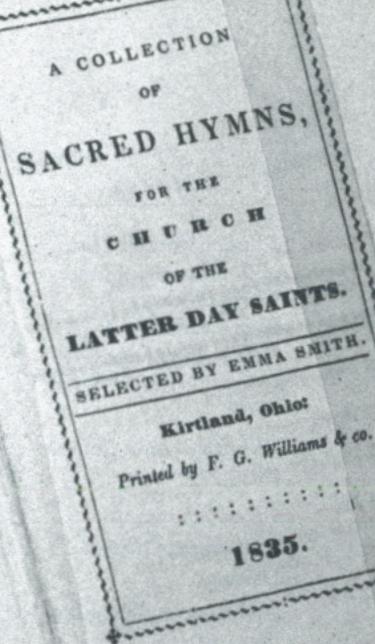
For a two-year period W. W. Phelps fell into apostasy and was excommunicated from the Church. Repentant, he sought forgiveness from the Prophet, to which Joseph responded, “I shall be happy once again to give you the right hand of fellowship, and rejoice over the returning prodigal.”²

Following the Martyrdom, William expressed his love and devotion to Joseph Smith in the hymn “Praise to the Man.”

Arriving in the Salt Lake Valley in 1848, William was appointed as one of the first

In Emma’s hymns, for the Church of the Latter Day Saints, there is a code above each of the ninety hymns designating the type of meter required. Many of the hymns could be sung to more than one familiar tune. Some of the tunes used were adaptations of folk tunes, which were familiar to many in that day.

The Preface to this hymnal reads: “In order to sing by the Spirit, and with the understanding, it is necessary that the church of the Latter Day Saints should have a collection of ‘Sacred Hymns,’ adapted to their faith and belief in the gospel, and, as far as can be, holding forth the promises made to the fathers who died in the precious faith of a glorious resurrection, and a thousand years’ reign on earth with the Son of Man in his glory. Notwithstanding the church, as it were, is still in its infancy, yet, as the song of the righteous is a prayer unto God, it is sincerely hoped that the following collection, selected with an eye single to his glory, may answer every purpose till more are



One of the first hymn books, on display at Museum of Church History and Art.

regents of the University of Deseret and later served in the Utah legislature.

William Wines Phelps died 7 March 1872 in Salt Lake City.

The following fifteen of W. W. Phelps’s numerous hymn texts are in the hymnal:

- “The Spirit of God”
- “Now Let Us Rejoice”
- “Redeemer of Israel” (printed in *The Evening and The Morning Star*, 1832)
- “Now We’ll Sing with One Accord”
- “Praise to the Man”
- “Come, All Ye Saints of Zion”
- “Glorious Things Are Sung of Zion”
- “Adam-ondi-Ahman”
- “We’re Not Ashamed to Own Our Lord”
- “Come, All Ye Saints Who Dwell on Earth”
- “Gently Raise the Sacred Strain”
- “Come, Let Us Sing an Evening Hymn”
- “O God, the Eternal Father”
- “If You Could Hie to Kolob”
- “Joy to the World” (Isaac Watts, alt. by William W. Phelps) ▼

Notes

1 Sydney Marie Hughes, “W. W. Phelps,” in Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History, ed. Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 917.

2 History of the Church, 4:163–64.

Notes

1 Joseph Smith's History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, edited by B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book), 1974; Vol. 1:270.

2 History of the Church, Vol. 2:273.

3 Emma Smith, A Collection of Sacred Hymns.

4 History of the Church, Vol. 4:17.

5 Times and Seasons, Nauvoo, Illinois, 1 November 1840.

6 Times and Seasons, Vol. 2:374.

7 Buddy Youngren, Reflections of Emma, (Orem, Utah: Grandin Book Company), 93.

8 Youngren, 67.

9 Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, Richard O. Cowan quoting Michael F. Moody, in Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 807.

composed, or till we are blessed with a copious variety of the songs of Zion.”³

The frontice piece of the hymnal is dated Kirtland, Ohio, 1835. However, the book was not completed until early in 1836. It was presumably available to the Saints in time for the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, which took place 27 March 1836. Six hymns were sung at the dedication; all are found within Emma's small volume. This book served the Saints for the next few tempestuous years.

After the Church was established in Illinois, the High Council of Nauvoo, in October 1839, “Voted, that Sister Emma Smith select and publish a hymn-book for the use of the Church.”⁴

The Times and Seasons, 1 Nov. 1840 carried the following interesting notice: “HYMNS! HYMNS! Having just returned from Cincinnati, Ohio, with paper and other materials for publishing a new selection of Hymns which have so long been desired by the Saints, we contemplate commencing the work immediately; and feeling desirous to have an extensive, and valuable book; it is requested that all those who have been endowed with a poetical genius, whose muse has not been altogether idle, will feel enough interest in a work of this kind, to immediately forward all choice, newly composed, or revised hymns. In designating those who are endowed with a poetical genius, we do not intend to exclude others; we mean ALL who have good hymns that will cheer the heart of the righteous man, to send them as soon as practicable, directed to Mrs. Emma Smith, Nauvoo, Ill. Post Paid.”⁵

Contributors to Emma's original hymnbook included Eliza R. Snow, Parley P. Pratt, W. W. Phelps, and many others. It has been suggested that Emma may have been the humble unnamed author of some of the hymns she included in her collection.

The Times and Seasons, dated 15 April 1841, notes that during the celebration of the anniversary of the Church, on April 6th, and at the ceremony of laying the cornerstones for the Nauvoo Temple, the

congregation sang from “the new hymn book.”⁶ The subsequent edition was printed in 1841 by Ebenezer Robinson, then editor of *The Times and Seasons*.

Although the Prophet Joseph Smith was not a musician, he loved music. He encouraged the organization of music classes in the Nauvoo University, and each ward in the Church was encouraged to organize a choir. Music was also an important part of the Smith's family worship. One grandson, Frederick Alexander Smith, noted of Emma, “Grandmother loved music.” He went on to tell that when they sang in the evening family devotionals, she did not even need to turn on a light, for “she knew all the words by heart.”⁷ A granddaughter, Emma Smith McCallum, recalled that Emma had a sweet high soprano voice. She often heard her grandmother singing as she went about her work in the house and garden.⁸

Emma's original collection of Sacred Hymns is a legacy of musical expression in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. It represents a monumental contribution to the musical worship enjoyed in the Church today. One historian notes, “This first hymnbook stands as a foundation of the Church's musical tradition, with almost a third of its texts still found in the current hymnbook.”⁹

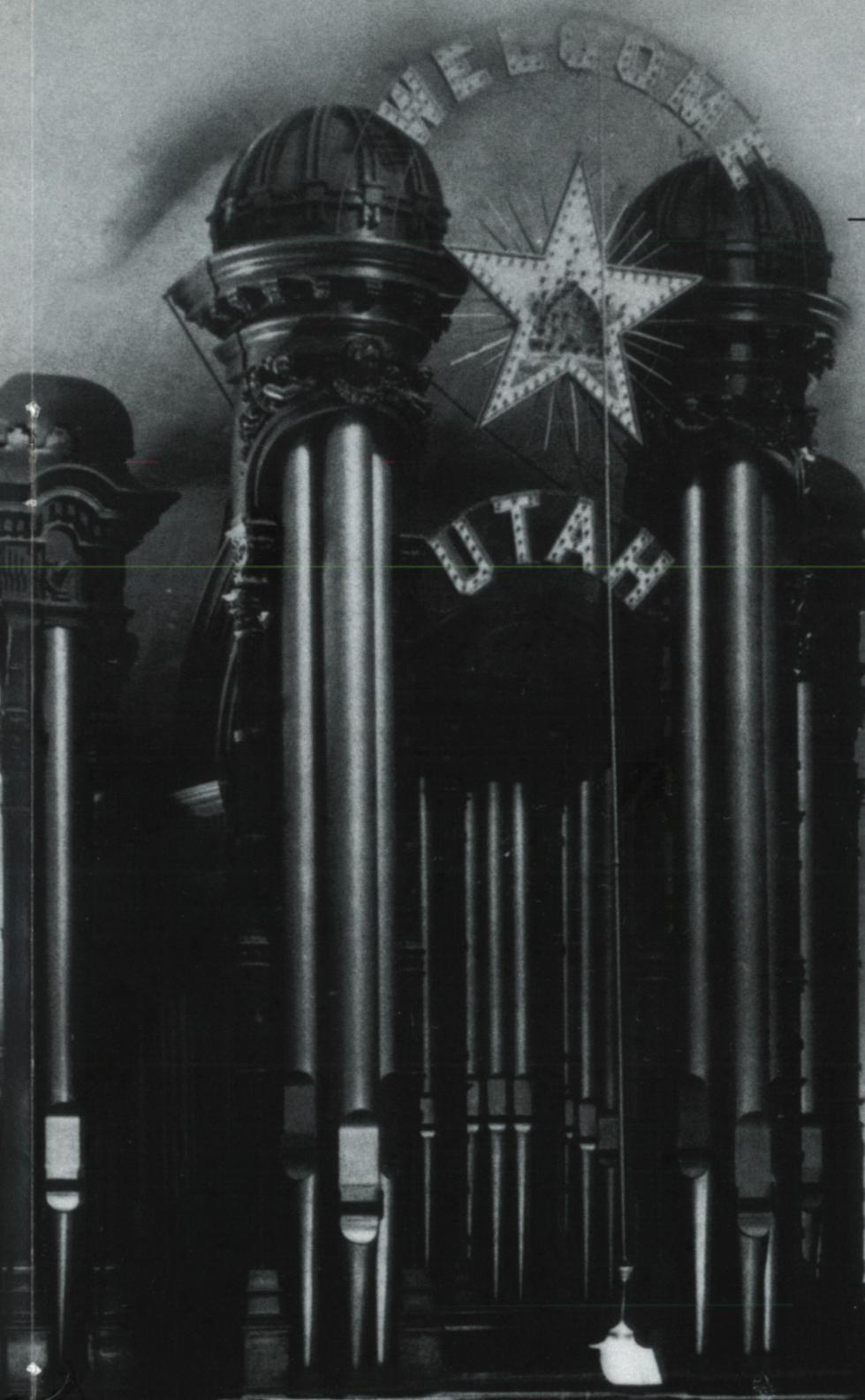


Gracia N. Jones was born and raised in Montana on the Flathead Indian Reservation, where she and her father were members of that tribe. A direct descendant of Emma, her grandmother, Coral Smith Horner, was the ninth child of Alexander Hale Smith, son of Joseph and Emma.



Alexander Hale Smith

Gracia was converted to the LDS Church in 1956 while living in Conrad, Montana. She is the mother of 8 children, grandmother of 37, great-grandmother of 7. She served as a journalist (for the Deseret News) to the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing, China, in 1995. She is author of *Priceless Gifts* and *Emma and Joseph: Their Divine Mission*, published by Covenant Communications. She has given many lectures and classes including three years at BYU Education Week.



Beginnings of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir

By Michael Hicks

For Brigham Young and his followers, musical training could steer a Saint toward Zion. Vocal music was a "useful art," an endeavor that brought delight and well-being. It improved the spirit and the understanding—not to mention the body. Following the teachings of the best-known American physician of the time, Benjamin Rush, Young believed singing was a means for improving lung capacity, getting the full draft of fresh air that a people in the high mountains would need to fend off "consumption" (especially Young himself, who had suffered for years from bouts of what he called "lung fever"). Beyond its benefits to the individual, however, singing in a choir had a special virtue: the concord of voices symbolized the beauty of cooperative effort, the founding principle of Zion.

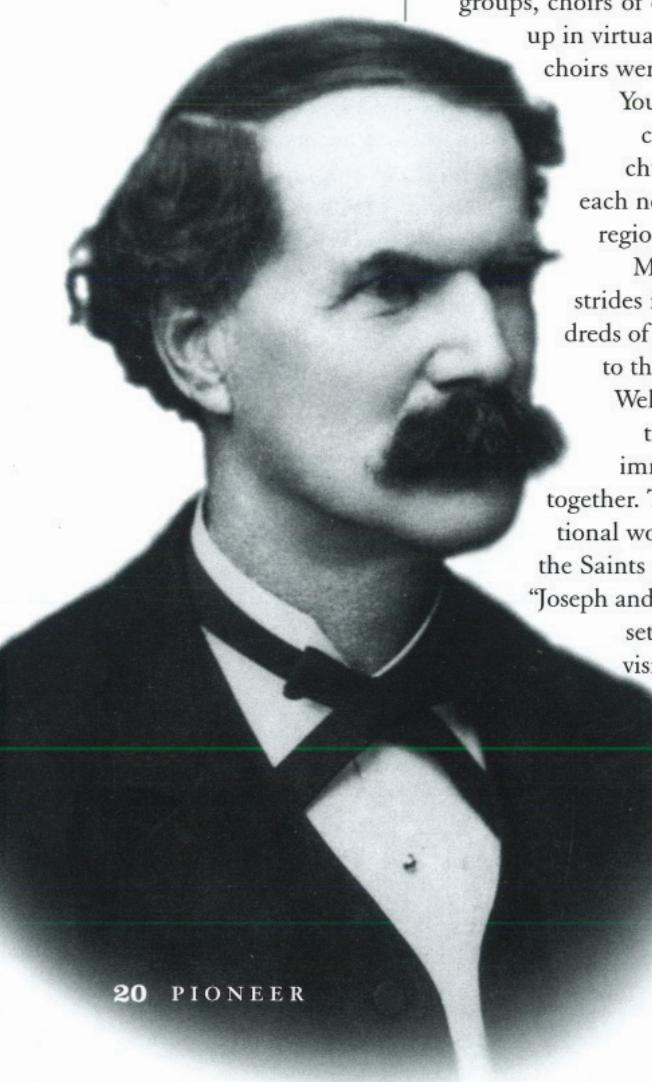
Beginning afresh in the Rocky Mountain wilderness, the Saints needed some time to recover the cultural richness they had found alongside the Mississippi. The loose rocky soil of the Salt Lake Valley was a far cry from the fine dark



After hearing Charles John Thomas directing the Fourteenth Ward choir in a concert, Brigham Young assigned Thomas as the first of several highly trained British emigrant conductors to take over the newly named "Tabernacle Choir."



Charles John Thomas



earth of the Midwest. For a few years crops festered and the quest for survival outran the need for musical art. But the continual meetings of the Mormons required sacred vocal music. Within a week of entering the Salt Lake Valley the first company of pioneers chose a site for a new temple and erected on it a bowery of heavy timber posts and branches under which the people could hold religious and civil meetings. Before a crowd of perhaps several hundred in August 1847, a small choir led by Stephen Goddard sang for the Saints' first conference in the land they called "Deseret,"—a Book of Mormon name for the honeybee, a symbol of industry and cooperation.

Such choirs in early Deseret sang hymns for religious meetings as well as for quasi-religious gatherings such as the convocations of the Deseret Theological Institute. They also sang patriotic and devotional songs for the two principal public holidays, the Fourth of July and the Twenty-Fourth of July (the anniversary of the Saints' entry into the valley). Given the evident need for singing groups, choirs of one sort or another sprang

up in virtually every settlement. These choirs were often formed at Brigham Young's request, and he made certain that musically gifted church members were part of each new colonizing group in the region.

Mormonism had made great strides in Wales, and in 1849 hundreds of Welsh converts immigrated to the Great Basin. Because the Welsh had strong choral traditions, a large group of these immigrants inevitably banded together. They performed new devotional works such as "Wend ye with the Saints today," and hero songs like "Joseph and Hyrum," usually in dialect set to familiar Welsh tunes. A visitor to a Church conference in 1852 wrote of the Welsh choir's power to "exhilarate all present by singing one of their hymns, to one of their charming, wild, romantic, airs."¹ For that conference an oblong, arched adobe



Early ward choir.

structure capable of holding 2,500 Saints had been set up at the site of the bowery, in order to relieve the transplanted Nauvoo choir of having to sing in the open air. Taking its name from the new building, the former Nauvoo choir, which had attracted some of the Welsh singers into its ranks, now began to call itself the "Tabernacle Choir."

The choir's first highly trained British emigrant conductor—the first of several—was Charles John Thomas, better known as "C. J." Little is known about the directorial change, except by inference. Brigham Young had heard Thomas directing the Fourteenth Ward choir in a concert that also included David Calder's singing school chorus and the Tabernacle Choir. Two weeks later, Young released the current conductor of the latter group, James Smithies, and asked Thomas to take over. Thomas readily accepted, of course, and had good success with his new choir, despite its small size: as late as 1861, according to one report, the choir had only "about a dozen persons" in its membership.² That meant it was dwarfed by several ward choirs (including the one he had left in the Fourteenth Ward) and various singing school choirs in Salt Lake City. The choir's rise in numbers (and in fame) arguably began with the calling of its next director.

In 1864 a diminutive young British violinist named George Careless reached the Salt Lake Basin. He had been trained at



London's relatively new Royal Academy of Music, where he had completed the four-year course in three years under tutors such as Manuel Garcia. He also had played under the batons of Luigi Arditti and Wilhelm Ganz. Sometime after Careless was converted by Mormon missionaries in 1850, a church elder, William Staines, persuaded him that he must devote his skill to Zion by emigrating to Utah. (This was, of course, the customary advice given to all Mormon artists and artisans in the mid-nineteenth century.) He arrived there only to find music in Utah controlled by a handful of fellow countrymen. His wages limited to those of a private teacher, Careless vowed to attempt making a living at music for two years, unless he starved first.³

A few months after he arrived in Utah (so Careless maintained throughout his life) Young called Careless privately to his office and asked him to "lay a foundation of good music" in Deseret. Careless replied to Young that he would "do the best I can with the material I can get," to which Young quipped, "Oh, you will have to make that." A discussion of style ensued between the two men. Young asked Careless to foster "sweet music"—his term for sentimental popular songs and rollicking dances—while Careless insisted that Mormon music sometimes must be vigorous and bold. Young conceded the point and told Careless he was "all right."⁴ However accurate Careless's story may have

been, Young did send C. J. Thomas to southern Utah in 1865 on a mission to found singing schools, direct bands, and teach basic harmony, and appointed Careless director of the Salt Lake Theatre orchestra (which had also been Thomas's job) and overseer of the choir in the Tabernacle.⁵ At Careless's first meeting with the choir, then still in the original ("old") Tabernacle, he found the building dark and cold. The meager group of singers sported candles in order to read their oblong partbooks and keep warm. Careless demanded of Young more choir members, heat, and light for their Friday night rehearsals. Young acquiesced.⁶

By the 1870s the Tabernacle Choir, now about eighty-five members strong, had become the nucleus of several huge "monster choruses," as Careless temporarily imported choristers from outlying settlements during the Church's semiannual conferences held in the new Tabernacle: a strange, oblong domed structure described by one of the Mormon apostles as resembling "Noah's ark turned bottom side up."⁷ In 1873, for example, the Tabernacle congregation enjoyed a choir of 304 members assembled from fifteen settlements.⁸ In 1876 Careless mounted the first western territory performance of the centerpiece of many municipal choral jubilees—Handel's *Messiah*. Except for Careless's wife, apparently, none of the combined forces for the work had ever heard it before, other than the "Hallelujah" chorus, which had been sung in Utah at least since 1853. Thus, because the work was so little known, the performance necessitated a great deal of learning the music "by note" (instead of by ear). The phenomenon of an oratorio in the frontier metropolis attracted crowds to the Salt Lake Theatre for two nights, and was considered by Edward Tullidge the birth of "supreme" musical culture in Mormonism.⁹

Despite his success, or rather because of it, Careless resigned the choir in 1880, partly to pursue professional touring engagements with his own orchestra—which also, regrettably, bore his own name: the Careless Orchestra. The choir, by that time acting on strongly democratic principles, voted Thomas Griggs to become its new conductor. But Griggs was then away on a proselyting mission. So his assistant, Ebenezer Beesley—primarily known as a hymn writer, bandmaster, and music arranger—became acting

Shortly after arriving in the Salt Lake Valley in 1864, a young British violinist named George Careless was called privately to Brigham Young's office and given the charge to "lay a foundation of good music" in Deseret.

—JAMES R. DAVIS

Early Tabernacle Choir (19), Charles Thomas (20) © Utah State Historical Society. Early ward choir (20–21) © by Intellectual Reserve Inc., courtesy Museum of Church History and Art.

By 1883, with Ebenezer Beesley as conductor, the Tabernacle Choir had 101 singers enrolled: 39 sopranos, 13 altos, 15 tenors, and 34 basses.



conductor. The diary of one chorister summarized the general response to Beesley's first rehearsal with the choir: "Beesley leads the choir. George is missed very much."¹⁰ To the surprise of the choir, when Griggs returned in 1881 he refused to unseat Beesley and chose instead to become the group's treasurer. Beesley remained in control of the choir for a decade. By then (according to the 1882–83 minutes), the Tabernacle Choir had 101 singers enrolled: 39 sopranos, 13 altos, 15 tenors, and 34 basses.¹¹

In 1884 the Logan Utah *Journal* wrote that the Tabernacle Choir had greatly improved its technique and "promises to become as good as that of our Logan choir. When it does Utah will possess two splendid choral organizations."¹² In the face of such backhanded compliments Beesley struggled to redeem his choir's reputation. He complained at his group's having to prepare so much music for church conferences, calling it an "ordeal," yet also faulted many of his singers, who, he said, lacked sufficient talent to be members of the official Mormon choir.

Ordering that auditions be held for all singers, he inaugurated recruiting drives to attract better voices and established a perpetual benefit fund for the choir in order to sweeten the prospect of membership.

Unfortunately, Beesley's attempt to elevate standards coincided with the federal crusade against "cohabs." By February 1885 most of the prominent male singers in the choir dropped out for fear of being hunted down by federal officers pursuing polygamists or potential informers. Subsequent rolls reveal astounding absenteeism. By 1886, despite recruiting efforts, the choir membership still hovered around one hundred. And, according to another local musician, blunders continued to mark the choir's performances.¹³

As the decade closed the church was beset by a tempest of rhetoric on the question of polygamy. Anti-Mormons continued to campaign against it and some young Mormons were drifting away from "The Principle," as plural marriage was called, and from religious fundamentalism generally. At the same time many of their elders defended the old ways and

Ebenezer Beesley

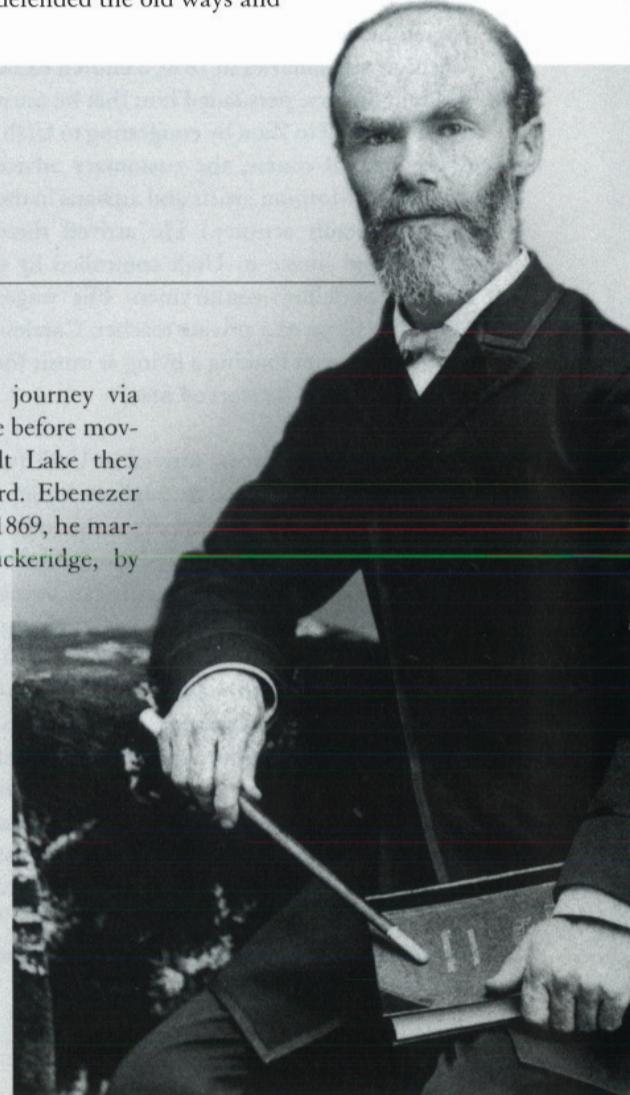
By Janet Peterson

Ebenezer Beesley was born in Bicester, Oxfordshire, England, 14 December 1840, the fourth child of William Sheppard Beesley and Susannah Edwards Beesley. Young Ebenezer was a musical prodigy. When his parents' Wesleyan Methodist choir practiced in the Beesley home, six-year-old Ebenezer could sing parts with them. So impressed were they with his musical talent, a group of women wanted to send him to St. George's Chapel in Windsor to be a choir boy. His parents refused to let him go.¹

About this time his mother and father joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Ebenezer himself was baptized 22 September 1849. Ten years later, Ebenezer married Sarah Hancock in England. The new Beesley family emigrated

to Utah in 1859, making the journey via handcart. They settled in Tooele before moving to Salt Lake City; in Salt Lake they resided in the Nineteenth Ward. Ebenezer and Sarah had ten children. In 1869, he married a plural wife, Annie Buckeridge, by whom he had six children.

Ebenezer was immersed in music. According to J. Spencer Cornwall, "leading the singing in the Sunday School, revising and preparing music for the *Juvenile Instructor*, directing the ward choir, studying the violin under Professors C. J. Thomas and George Careless, composing Sunday School music,



defied the government to tamper further with the church's practices. In October 1890 Woodruff announced that the church would no longer sanction polygamy. The same month, he released Beesley from his duties and called a young Welsh bachelor named Evan Stephens to lead the Tabernacle Choir.¹⁴ That calling proved to be the beginning of the choir's modern era.

At the close of the nineteenth century, Mormons were searching for their place in American culture. Fortunately, America's own search for cultural identity would open the way for Mormons to show the world what musical beauty could be produced by a religion that many citizens still regarded as a blot on the nation. In 1892, the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's landing in the West Indies, Chicagoans organized a "World's Columbian Exposition" to celebrate American enterprise and art. As part of the exhibition, which took place in 1893, they planned a massive choral competition (Eisteddfod) to be run by Welsh entrepreneurs. Stephens's Welsh heritage helped

secure him an invitation to the competition, an event which would provide the first great public success of a new American musical institution: the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

By the fall of 1892 the Tabernacle choir had grown astoundingly—over 550 enrolled members, many of whom had been brought in from Stephens's popular singing schools in Salt Lake City. But absenteeism at rehearsals still averaged a whopping 45 percent, keeping the reliable numbers at just over 300 (not far from the size to which we are now accustomed). Despite the poor rehearsal turnout, however, the choir had ample opportunities for public practice. Perhaps the greatest boon to their competition in Chicago, September 1893, came the previous April, when the choir performed at no fewer than 31 dedication services for the Salt Lake Temple. That September, of the four choirs competing in Chicago, the Tabernacle Choir took second place. It was a stunning achievement, but not good enough for Stephens, the choir, and even church president Wilford Woodruff, who believed (and even spread) the rumor that the contest's

By the fall of 1892 the Tabernacle Choir had grown astoundingly—over 550 enrolled members, many of whom had been brought in from the popular singing schools in Salt Lake City under the Welch bachelor Evan Stephens.



compiling songbooks for Sunday Schools and Mutual Improvement Associations, later directing the production of the *Latter-day Saints' Psalmody*, were some of his busy activities."²

Ebenezer composed music especially for the Sunday School. Two of his hymns sung today, "Welcome, Welcome Sabbath Morning" and "We Meet Again in Sabbath School," affirm the importance of Sunday School. The Deseret Sunday School Union printed music cards before the publication of its Music Book in 1884, so that the Saints could sing the new hymn tunes rather than relying on folk or Christian tunes. Ebenezer's hymn "Never from Thee" was introduced as Card No. 5.³ Other hymns of Ebenezer's appeared in the Tune Book for the Primary Association, the *Juvenile Instructor*, and the Improvement Association Song Book. His hymn tunes were much loved in his day as they still are in our day.

In 1880, Ebenezer was called as conductor of the Tabernacle Choir,

which he led for the next nine years. He also played in the Salt Lake Theatre Orchestra and often filled in for George Careless as conductor.

Ebenezer Beesley died 21 March 1906 in Salt Lake City.

Eleven of Ebenezer Beesley's hymn compositions appear in *Hymns*, 1985:

- "High on the Mountain Top"
- "What Glorious Scenes Mine Eyes Behold"
- "The Happy Day at Last Has Come"
- "God of Our Fathers, We Come unto Thee"
- "Great is the Lord"
- "Sing We Now at Parting"
- "'Tis Sweet to Sing the Matchless Love"
- "Reverently and Meekly Now"
- "Let Us Oft Speak Kind Words"
- "Welcome, Welcome, Sabbath Morning"
- "We Meet Again in Sabbath School" ▶

Notes

1 J. Spencer Cornwall, Stories of Our Mormon Hymns (*Salt Lake City: Deseret Book*, 1975), 106–7.

2 Cornwall, 107.

3 "Latter-day Saints' Psalmody," quoted in Karen Lynn Davidson, Our Latter-day Saint Hymns: The Stories and the Messages (*Salt Lake City: Deseret Book*, 1988), 106.

Ebenezer Beesley (22); Evan Stephens (24) © Utah State Historical Society.

In Chicago, in 1893, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir competed in the "World's Columbian Exposition" celebration of American enterprise and art.

WILLIAM G. HARRIS

Evan Stephens

By Janet Peterson

Welsh organizers had fixed the outcome. Apostle Joseph F. Smith wrote to his wife that the Utah choir "fairly and honestly" deserved first place but "this was too much honor to confer upon Utah and the Mormons." Nevertheless, he conceded, the "seed sown will be a good fruit in a day to come. . . . I consider it has done more good than five thousand Sermons would have done in an ordinary or even in an extraordinary way."¹⁵

That realization, shared by many church leaders, forever changed the status of the choir. Once a showpiece for the Saints to

admire within their closeted environs, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir had shown that it could be a powerful missionary enterprise. It had the potential not only to bolster the esteem of Mormons in the eyes of a still suspicious world but also to attract their hearers to the Latter-day gospel. Thenceforth, the choir took every chance it could to spread its voice abroad—touring, recording, and eventually broadcasting, first on radio and later on television. From its homespun origins the choir would begin to fulfill Brigham Young's hope that someday "we can sing the gospel into the hearts of the people."¹⁶ ▼

Evan Stephens's philosophy of Mormon music, "that which breathes optimism and not pessimism"¹ permeates the dozens of hymns for which he composed music and/or wrote lyrics.

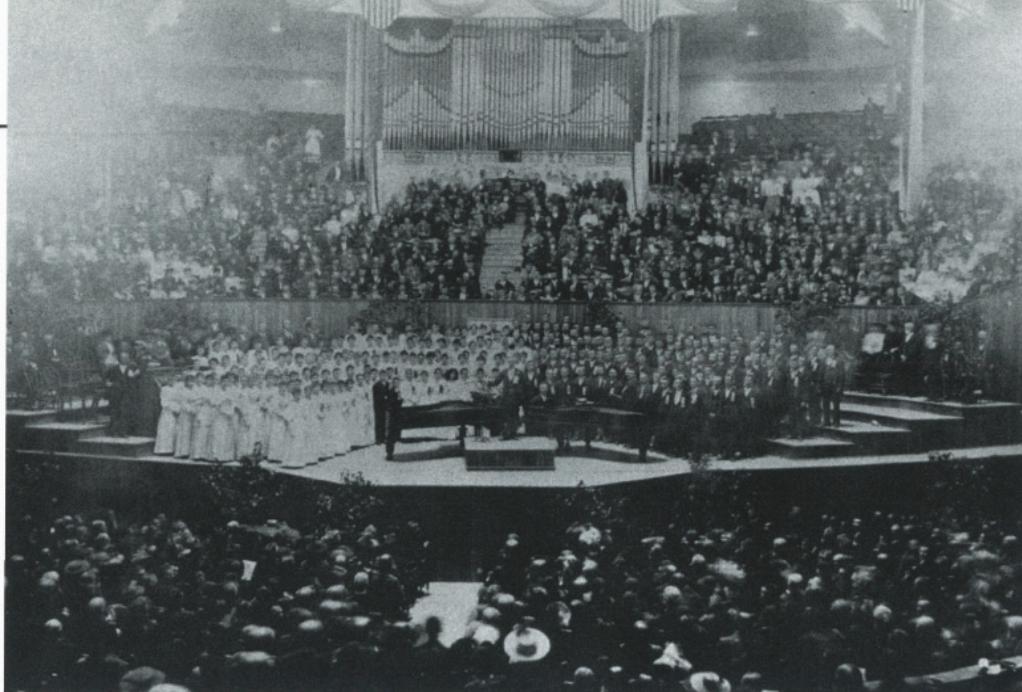
Called the "tithing" child by his father, Evan Stephens was the tenth child of a Welsh family that had already embraced The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

He was born 28 June 1854, in Pencader, Wales. When Evan was twelve years old, the Stephens family made the journey to Zion, and settled in Willard, Utah. Soon Evan joined the ward choir and was so thrilled with the experience that he asked to take a music book home with him. With this book in hand, he taught himself to read, play, and write music.²

Though as a young man he had to labor as a herd boy, farmhand, woodcutter, hod carrier, and railway section hand,³ Evan's life was devoted to music.

When his older brother bought a four-octave organ, Evan eagerly learned to play it without instruction. With this instrument, he experimented with composing complicated works. He later studied organ with Joseph J. Daynes, the Tabernacle organist. A dream was realized for Evan when he enrolled at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston.⁴

A faculty member at the University of Deseret for seventeen years, Evan taught



Scene in Festival Hall,
Columbia World's Fair,
Chicago, 8 September
1893. The Mormon
Tabernacle Choir, Evan
Stephens conducting,
competing for the grand
Eisteddfod International
Prize. Awarded Second
Premium of \$1,000.00.

thousands of choral, vocal, opera, and organ students. He loved teaching young people and wrote a hymn especially for the youth of the Church, the story of which is as follows. Evan hiked up City Creek Canyon and pondered what President Joseph F. Smith had said in his address on "The Third and Fourth Generations." While sitting on a stream bank, he "observed how the rock he was resting on remained firm despite the pressure of the rushing waters. Words came rapidly to his mind, and he wrote the lyrics of the stirring song 'True to the Faith.' . . . Then ruling off a few staves of music on a piece of paper, he composed the music. The song was first sung at the general Sunday School conference in 1905, and on the original copy was written 'Lovingly dedicated to my 20,000 pupils of Zion. Evan Stephens.'⁵

In 1890, Evan was named conductor of the Tabernacle Choir and served in that capacity for twenty-six years. Evan's leadership garnered the choir second prize at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, for which they received \$1,000, and he, a gold medal.⁶ During his tenure, he more than doubled the size of the choir and brought it into national prominence.

A prolific composer, Evan penned nearly ninety hymns, as well as writing anthems, cantatas, operas, vocal solos, duets, trios, and quartets.⁷ He served on the General Church Music Committee which compiled *The Latter-day Saints' Psalmody*. To help Utahans celebrate the long-awaited granting of statehood he composed "Utah, We Love Thee," sung by a thousand children in a Tabernacle program.⁸

Evan loved spending time in the mountains, especially near Brighton. J. Spencer

Cornwall recalls hiking with him to a certain spot, where Evan would lead an imaginary choir of pines. His many happy hours spent in the nearby canyons prompted him to write with Emmeline B. Wells the hymn "Our Mountain Home, So Dear."

Never married, Evan Stephens died on 27 October 1930, in Salt Lake City.

Eighteen of Evan Stephens's hymns are included in our current hymnal. He composed the following:

- "What Was Witnessed in the Heavens?" (music)
- "Awake, Ye Saints of God, Awake!" (music)
- "The Voice of God Again Is Heard" (text and music)
- "We Ever Pray for Thee" (text, musical adaptation)
- "Our Mountain Home, So Dear" (music)
- "For the Strength of the Hills" (music)
- "Lo, the Mighty God Appearing!" (music)
- "Raise Your Voices to the Lord" (text and music)
- "Praise Ye the Lord" (music)
- "Father, Thy Children to Thee Now Raise" (text and music)
- "Ye Simple Souls Who Stray" (music)
- "Lean on My Ample Arm" (music)
- "In Remembrance of Thy Suffering" (text and music)
- "Today, While the Sun Shines" (music)
- "Let Us All Press On" (text and music)
- "True to the Faith" (text and music)
- "See, the Mighty Angel Flying" (music)
- "O Home Beloved" (text) ▶

Notes

1 J. Spencer Cornwall, *Stories of Our Mormon Hymns* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 173.

2 Carol Cornwall Madsen, "Our Heritage of Hymns," *New Era*, Nov. 1975, 12.

3 Cornwall, 155.

4 Wendell J. Ashton, "Evan Stephens: Monarch in Mormon Music," *Pioneer*, Winter 1995, 23.

5 Madsen, 4.

6 Pat Graham, "Making Music for the Church," *Friend*, Oct. 1987, 36.

7 Gerald L. Homer, "George Careless," in *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History*, ed. Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 1192.

8 Ashton, 23.

A native of San Jose, California, Michael Hicks is currently a professor of music at Brigham Young University. This article consists largely of excerpts from the author's *Mormonism and Music: A History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), chapters 3, 6, and 9. Copyright 1989 by Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois. Used with permission of the author and the University of Illinois Press.

Notes

1 J. W. Gunnison, *The Mormons or, Latter-day Saints, in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1856), 37. See also *Deseret News*, 3 and 10 August 1850.

2 *Daily Missouri Republican*, 4 May 1861.

3 George D. Pyper, "In Intimate Touch with George Careless," *Juvenile Instructor* 59 (March 1924): 115–18. For another survey of Careless's career see Bruce David Maxwell, "George Careless, Pioneer Musician," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 53 (Spring 1985): 131–43.

4 See the eulogy given Careless by Edward P. Kimball, published in Howard Hoggan Putnam, "George Edward Percy Careless: His Contributions to the Musical Culture of Utah and the Significance of His Life and Works" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1957), 95, and the slightly different account in Susa Young Gates and Leah D. Widtsoe, *The Life Story of Brigham Young* (New York: Macmillan, 1930), 247.

5 Although Robert Sands appears as conductor of the choir in newspaper notices of the choir 1865–69, Careless seems to have maintained he was the actual overseer during this period. See the discussion in Putnam, "George Careless," 30–31.

6 See Pyper, "In Intimate Touch," *Juvenile Instructor* 59 (April 1924): 174; and 59 (May 1924): 233.

7 George A. Smith to Hanna P. Butler, 28 January 1869, *Historian's Office Letterpress Copybook*, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. See also the accounts of the Boston World Jubilee in *Deseret News*, June 1872, *passim*.

8 *Deseret News*, 8 October 1873. See also the call "to the Choir Masters and Choristers of the Territory," *Deseret News*, 23 October 1872.

9 See Tullidge's History of Salt Lake City (*Salt Lake City: Star*, 1886), 777. Due to a powerful thunderstorm, the attendance of the second night was poor.

10 McIntyre Journal, 22 August 1880. For a compendium of primary sources on Beesley see Sterling E. Beesley, *Kind Words the Beginnings of Mormon Melody: A Historical Biography and Anthology of the Life and Works of Ebenezer Beesley, Utah Pioneer Musician* (N.p.: Published by the author, 1980), 248–49.

11 These figures and other information in this paragraph are from the *Tabernacle Choir Minutes*, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

12 *Utah Journal*, 12 April 1884.

13 *Tabernacle Choir Minutes*, 9 April 1886.

14 See Benjamin F. Cummings, Jr. "Shining Lights: Professor Evan Stephens," *Contributor* 16 (September 1895): 659.

15 Joseph F. Smith to Sarah Ellen Richards Smith, quoted in Charles Jeffrey Calman and William I. Kaufman, *The Mormon Tabernacle Choir* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 70.

16 As recounted by George Careless and quoted in Levi Edgar Young, "The Mormon Tabernacle with Its World-Famed Organ and Choir" (*Salt Lake City: Bureau of Information*, 1930), 19.

CHANGES

Implications and Opportunities

Douglas Campbell examined changes in the following four hymnals published by the First Presidency: *A Collection of Sacred Hymns, for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (1835); *Latter-day Saint Hymns* (1927); *Hymns: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (1948); and *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (1985). His research includes the following fascinating facts:

"The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints operates in a constantly changing world, and the interplay between the world and the church's message is dynamic.

Emma Smith was commanded (D&C 25:11) to choose the 90 hymns that constituted the 1835 hymnal. Fifty-five were retained in the 1927 hymnal, thirty were retained in the 1948 hymnal, and twenty-six were retained in the 1985 hymnbook."

One example of changes in the 1927 hymnal is W. W. Phelps's hymn "Praise to the Man." In verse 2 it previously read: "Long may his blood, / which was shed by assassins, / Stain Illinois / while the earth lauds his fame." Campbell quotes George D. Pyper: "When the Latter-day saint Hymn book was compiled in 1927, in order to be in harmony with the 'good neighbor' policy of the Church and nation, the second line was changed to 'Long may his blood, / which was shed by assassins, / Plead unto heaven, / while the earth lauds his fame.'"¹

"The 1927, 380 hymn, 'Father! Lead Me out of Darkness,' had been written by John A. Widtsoe, a member of the Twelve in both 1927 and 1948. When the time came to revise the 1927 hymnal, the church music committee suggested that the hymn be deleted since it wasn't sung. Alexander Schreiner objected:

"After all, these were words written by an Apostle of the Lord. It was decided that I should approach Elder Widtsoe, proposing to change the title, which seemed negative, and adjust a few words.

"Elder Widtsoe said, 'You don't under-

IN LDS HYMNS

stand, Brother Schreiner. It is being sung by a nonmember. I don't want anybody to change the words. Nonmembers are in darkness.'

"But Elder Widtsoe,' I responded, 'when you go to stake conference and give an inspirational and enlightening message to the saints, how would you feel if the stake president announced that the closing hymn will be "Father! Lead me out of darkness"?'

"Elder Widtsoe could then see the point of giving this fine hymn a positive title. . . which then became 'Lead Me into Life Eternal.'"² . . .

"Three years after the extension of the priesthood to blacks in June 1978, in an equally dramatic move the First Presidency authorized a change in the Book of Mormon in 2 Nephi 30:6: "and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightsome people." Since 1981, 2 Nephi 30:6 reads: "and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a pure and delightsome people." Removing hymnal references to Native Americans and blacks has assisted missionary work, which views the field as white, ready to harvest."

Of the retained hymns between the 1948 and the 1985 hymnals, "many changes in wording reflected church changes" in self-perception, compassion, philosophy, sensitivity to gender, and geography. Examples include:

"Up, Awake, Ye Defenders of Zion," 1948 hymnal pg 37:1 version read: "Remember the wrongs of Missouri; / forget not the fate of Nauvoo. / When the God-hating foe is before you / stand firm and be faithful and true." The 1985 revised version (pg. 248:1) reads: "Remember the trials of Missouri; / forget not the courage of Nauvoo. / When the enemy host is before you / stand firm and be faithful and true."

Hymns changed as the church became international: "Rejoice, Ye Saints of Latter Days," written in 1950 for the Idaho Falls temple dedication by Mabel Gabbott first included the line: "Another temple to our God/Now stands upon this chosen sod." The 1985

hymnal now reads: "Rejoice ye Saints of latter days, For temples now in many lands." . . .

"Spencer W. Kimball, a member of the Quorum of Twelve, attended a conference in Elko, Nevada, where the primary sang 'I Am a Child of God.' On the trip home, he expressed his love for the song, then stated that there was one word in the chorus that concerned him. He wondered if the author would change the line: 'Teach me all that I must know / to live with him some day.' to: 'Teach me all that I must do / to live with him some day.'

"The author gladly made the change, but wondered why she hadn't included that thought at the time the lyrics were first written. She records, 'I came to feel that this was the way the Lord wanted the song to evolve, because it became a teaching moment for members all over the Church.'

"President Kimball was fond of saying, 'Naomi Randall wrote most of the words, but I wrote one!'"³

Douglas Campbell's research demonstrated how the changes in the hymnals reflect increased sensitivity to blacks, Native Americans, and women, and how the church music committee used ingenious methods to modify the hymns to reflect changes in the social, cultural, and political milieux in which the church disseminates its message.

The article "Changes in LDS Hymns: Implications and Opportunities" by Douglas Campbell, appeared in full in the Fall 1995 issue of Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, Vol. 28, No. 3: 65–91. Quoted material here is excerpted from that article.

Notes

1 George D. Pyper, Stories of the Latter-day Saint Hymns (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1939), 100.

2 Karen Lynn Davidson, Our Latter-day Hymns (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 75.

3 Our Latter-day Hymns, 303–4.

"A hymnbook is as good an index to the brains and to the hearts of a people as the creed book."

—Alexander Campbell



Children's Voices,

LIKE THE ANGELS UP ABOVE

*Hark! Hark! Hark! 'tis
children's music*

*Children's voices, O how sweet,
When in innocence and love,
Like the angels up above,
They with happy hearts
and cheerful faces meet.*

—“In Our Lovely Deseret,” by Eliza R. Snow

By Marilynne Todd Linford

The first meeting of the Primary Association convened 25 August 1878 in Farmington, Utah. Aurelia Spencer Rogers, under the direction of Bishop John W. Hess, had enrolled 224 children by canvassing the ward in the weeks preceding that historic Sunday. One hundred fifteen boys and one hundred girls attended. Sister Rogers had no class manuals, no teachers, no Gospel Art Kit, no Church videos, no microphone or air-conditioning, no crayons and paper, no CTR rings, no access to monthly ideas in the *Friend* or on the



Top 30

ALL-TIME FAVORITE PRIMARY SONGS

Internet, no *Children's Songbook*, and no direction from a Primary general presidency. "Early Primary workers were limited in their program offerings. About all they could do was to bring the children together, encourage them to speak little pieces, sing songs, to bear testimonies, thus helping them to counteract the evil influences of the street."¹

Despite all the things Sister Rogers didn't have, she had a "fondness for music"² and knew even before that first meeting that singing would be an integral part of the fledgling Primary. According to Aurelia's journal, "At first the children were very timid about singing; Brother Joseph E. Robinson came in a few times and assisted in starting them. Finally their voices rang out sweet and clear, and in some cases much talent was displayed."³

Sister Rogers's fondness for music led to the formation of a Primary chorus and martial band. The children displayed their singing talents at special Primary meetings, and in ward and community functions. In 1882, a band was organized with flutes, four drums, piccolo, and a triangle. It provided the first opportunity for many to work in a band. The group learned fast and in a few weeks could play several tunes. The band delighted the residents by marching through the streets of Farmington, serenading as they went."⁴

Sister Eliza R. Snow played an integral part not only in the organization of Primary but also in Primary music. In less than two years after the birth of Primary, she prepared and had published a small book, about four by five inches, the cover of which read: "Hymns and Songs, selected from Various Authors, for the Primary Association of the Children of Zion, by Eliza R. Snow, First Edition, Salt Lake City, The Deseret News Co., Printing and Publishing, 1880." A second edition came in 1888. The third edition, in 1893, included 121 hymns or songs, words only, of which Sister Snow had written 19.

Currently on display in the foyer at the Church Museum of History and Art is the "Primary Makes Me Happy: Celebrating 125 Years of Primary" exhibit. Visitors to this exhibit are given the opportunity to vote for their three favorite Primary songs, and Naomi Randall and Mildred Pettit's classic "I Am a Child of God" wins overwhelmingly every week.

1. "I Am a Child of God"
2. "I Love to See the Temple"
3. "A Child's Prayer"
4. "We'll Bring the World His Truth" (*Army of Helaman*)
5. "Book of Mormon Stories"
6. "Popcorn Popping"
7. "I Belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints"
8. "Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam"
9. "Love One Another"
10. "Latter-day Prophets"
11. "When I Am Baptized" (*I Like to Look for Rainbows*)
12. "Give Said the Little Stream"
13. "Nephi's Courage"
14. "Families Can Be Together Forever"
15. "Follow the Prophet"
16. "I Hope They Call Me on a Mission"
17. "Scripture Power"
18. "Love Is Spoken Here"
19. "Once There Was a Snowman"
20. "Teach Me to Walk in the Light"
21. "I Feel My Savior's Love"
22. "I'm Trying to Be Like Jesus"
23. "My Heavenly Father Loves Me"
24. "Called to Serve"
25. "Little Purple Pansies"
26. "Wise Man and the Foolish Man"
27. "Search, Ponder and Pray"
28. "Jesus Once Was a Little Child"
29. "Our Primary Colors"
30. "Do As I'm Doing"



At first the children were very timid about singing. . . . Finally their voices rang out sweet and clear.

—JULIA ROBERTS

Children singing (28); The Founding of the Primary Association by Lynne Fausett (30–31) © Intellectual Reserve Inc., courtesy Museum of Church History and Art. Primary songbook title page (30), Aurelia Rogers (31) courtesy Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

"Some of the early hymns of the Church were incorporated into this publication, such as 'Do What Is Right,' 'O My Father,' 'The Spirit of God,' and 'Joseph Smith's First Prayer.' Also included were a number of children's songs, some of which have survived to be part of the *Children's Songbook* [1989]: These included 'I Thank Thee, Dear Father,' 'In Our Lovely Deseret,' 'Child's Desire' (*I Think When I Read That Sweet Story*), 'All Things Bright and Beautiful,' 'Dare to Do Right,' and 'Christmas Cradle Song.' The melodies suggested to go with these verses, however, are not the ones that are sung today."⁵ Also published in 1880 was "the Tune Book of the Primary Associations of the Children of Zion, in which Sister Snow had enlisted the help of Mrs. Doctor Ferguson to arrange the music for the songs. This book contained forty pages of songs with words and music."⁶

HYMNS AND SONGS:

SELECTED FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS,

FOR THE

PRIMARY ASSOCIATIONS OF THE
CHILDREN OF ZION.

BY ELIZA R. SNOW.

FIRST EDITION.

(STEREOTYPE.)

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.
DESERT NEWS PRINTING AND PUBLISHING ESTABLISHMENT.
1880.



If a "favorites" list had been compiled during the first twenty years of Primary history, the top of the list most likely would have been "In Our Lovely Deseret," written by Eliza R. Snow and sung to a familiar marching tune. In the nineteenth century, this song was practically the theme song of the Primary. At a time when the Word of Wisdom was not yet thoroughly established as a Church practice, the song admonished children to "despise tea and coffee and tobacco, to drink no liquor and eat very little meat."⁷ No clear favorite emerges again until 1957 when "I Am a Child of God" was first sung; this song tops almost every survey since.

Aurelia Rogers and Eliza Snow played an important role in the development of the Primary music of the Church—their imprint made music an integral part of a child's Primary experience. For 125 years, children in the Church have had their own organization and their own music; they have been taught the gospel through song. ▶



Notes

¹ Conrad A. Harward, "A History of the Growth and Development of the Primary Association of the LDS Church from 1878–1928," BYU Masters Thesis, 1976, 40.

² *Ibid.*, 24.

³ Virginia B. Cannon, *Our Children's Songs: Teaching the Gospel with the Children's Songbook* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 357.

⁴ Harward, 24.

⁵ Cannon, 357.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Carol Cornwall Madsen, Susan Staker Oman, Sisters and Little Saints (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1979), 148–49.

Aurelia Rogers (above left) and Eliza Snow (above right) played an important role in the development of the Primary music of the Church.

SUP Highlights

This past April marked the 150th anniversary of when the first stone destined for use in the building of the Salt Lake Temple was hauled from Red Butte Canyon to Temple Square.

WILLIAMSON

THE FIRST CORNERSTONE

By Phoenix Roberts

On 2 April 1853, a wagon drawn by fourteen oxen left Red Butte Canyon and passed through the still-new Great Salt Lake City to deliver a 9-ton sandstone block to Temple Square—the first stone destined for use in the Salt Lake Temple. On Wednesday, 2 April 2003, the Sons of Utah Pioneers hauled a replica of that stone from the Historic 10th Ward Chapel to Temple Square in celebration of that momentous event.

Organized by SUP's **Sugarhouse Chapter**, the reenactment began at 8:00 A.M. with a small private ceremony at the Canyon. The University of Utah's Red Butte Garden & Arboretum occupies the site of the former temple quarry, and the staff provided a small sandstone actually cut in the 1850s, when Red Butte was providing foundation stones for the Temple and many other buildings.

The reenactment parade began at the 10th Ward Chapel, the last pioneer-era LDS Chapel still in use. A new musical group called Firewood entertained the participants and onlookers with period music as the parade assembled. A flag raising and Pledge



of Allegiance were led by members of the Mormon Battalion historic society, followed by a short speech from Sugarhouse Chapter member Earl Gillmore, who portrayed Brigham Young. Shortly after 10:00 A.M., the parade stepped off, heading toward Temple Square.

Chapter President Robert Race's daughter, Ashlee, and Amy Caldwell led the way with a placard proclaiming the sesquicentennial anniversary. "Brother Brigham" followed in a carriage, joined by SUP National President Louis Pickett. The oxcart followed, accompanied by the marchers in pioneer dress carrying construction tools of the





type used on the temple. Many of these are alumni of the 1997 Sesquicentennial Wagon Train.

Carriage For Hire, a livery stable that offers carriage rides around downtown Salt Lake, modified one of their wagons to re-create the oxcart. In place of real rock, Dixon Ford fashioned a foam replica about four feet by three feet by three feet. The Fruit Heights resident was also the ox drover—he raises and trains oxen and is one of the last drovers using the “Mormon silent command” system, controlling the oxen almost entirely by the placement and movement of his body.

Arriving in front of the Church Administration Building, the media descended on the group to get video for their noon news broadcast. The parade wound around Temple Square past the Church Museum and concluded in the parking lot north of the Church Office Building where “Brother Brigham,” Louis Pickett, and Robert Race made concluding remarks.

The actual cornerstones for the Salt Lake Temple were laid by the presiding quorums of the church as part of the general conference on 6 April 1853. The foundation was nearly completed by 1857 when the Saints learned that a US army force was approaching. They buried the foundation stones and the foundation of all the public works buildings on Temple Square to prevent desecration of their holy ground by the federal troops. When the army left at the outset of the Civil War the foundations were unearthed, revealing cracks in many of the stones. Fearing the compromised blocks would not support the planned building, President Young ordered the foundation rebuilt. The sandstones were crushed in place, and a new granite foundation installed on the pulverized bedrock. Though the rocks were insufficient to their original purpose, the sandstone base is still in place under the temple, and has acted as a cushion, safeguarding the temple through several earthquakes. ▶

Phoenix Roberts of the Olympus Hills Chapter is a freelance writer and historian.

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Michael Bennett, Mills
Alan Boyack, CM
W. Rex Brown, RR
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Chapter Eternal

In loving memory of our SUP brothers who have recently joined their pioneer forebears on the other side of the veil.

Pioneer rejoices in the lives of these good men and extends its sympathies and good wishes to families and loved ones.

Gary Berglund
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CORRECTION

Pioneer, Winter 2003 issue; “National Encampment 2003 registration form,” p. 31, had the incorrect address. Mail checks and form to:

Jim Finch
385 E. 400 So.
Spanish Fork,
UT 84660

If you would like your chapter's activities included in “SUP Highlights,” please send pertinent information to *Pioneer Magazine*, 3301 East 2920 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84109.

You can also email us at sonsofutahpioneers@networld.com.



All IS Well,

Pioneer Spotlight

William Clayton

By Rachel Matheson

One of the great traits of pioneering people throughout the ages is that they are positive. They have a belief, a hope, and a confidence that if they are true and faithful all will be well.

Nearly seven years before the pioneer exodus to the mountains of Utah, William Clayton, with a positive zeal he would tap into often, wrote to his fellow Saints in England, urging them to come to Zion, not realizing that "Zion" would soon be in wagons and handcarts moving west. William had learned through experience that all is well and there is nothing to fear when you are following the pioneering path of the Lord. He wrote:

"Although we are . . . distant from each other I do not forget you. . . . But to the praise of God be it spoken, all I have endured has never hurt or discouraged me, but done me good. . . . We have sometimes been almost suffocated with heat . . . , sometimes almost froze with cold. We have had to sleep on boards, instead of feathers. . . . We have had our clothes wet through with no privilege of drying them or changing them, . . . had to sleep . . . out of doors, in very severe weather, and many such things which you [have] no idea of. . . . [Yet] we have been . . . healthy & cheerful. . . . If you will be faithful, you have nothing to fear from the journey. The Lord will take care of his saints."¹

As Latter-day Saints all over the world sing the powerfully moving hymn, "Come, Come, Ye Saints," many do not stop to think about the history of the song and the writer behind it. Although some know William Clayton wrote it, and others know it was written while crossing the Great Plains to the Rocky Mountains, their knowledge ends there. Heber J. Grant's father-in-law, Oscar Winters, stated, "I

believe that the young people of Zion do not thoroughly appreciate what Brother Clayton's hymn meant to us, as we sang it, night after night, crossing the plains."²

The son of a teacher, William Clayton was born in 1814 in England. In his early years, he was taught good penmanship and writing skills, which later proved to be of great value to Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. He was also an accomplished musician, and was able to play the violin, horn, drum, and pianoforte. Around 1837, when he was twenty-three years old, William met the Mormon missionaries, led by Heber C. Kimball. He was taught by the missionaries and baptized soon after. William moved with his wife to Nauvoo a year later.

In Nauvoo, William worked for Joseph Smith and other leaders of the Church as a scribe, on occasion transcribing revelations under the Prophet's direction. After Joseph and Hyrum Smith were murdered in Carthage, the Twelve began urging the Saints to prepare for the journey west. The original plan was to leave in the spring of 1846, but with mobs and persecution growing, Brigham Young and the Twelve packed their wagons and started west in February 1846. At the time, William's wife, Diantha, was little more than a month from delivering her first child. William finally concluded that he should go with Brigham Young, and so he left Diantha in Nauvoo and started west as well.

The first weeks on the trail were hard on all the pioneers. The weather was bitterly cold; it rained or snowed almost constantly, making the dusty trail turn to thick mud that was hard to travel through; and sickness was widespread. Many families hadn't come with sufficient supplies or animals, and were depending on the Twelve and other leaders to help them along. To lift the camp's morale, Brigham



Notes

1 Letter from Commerce, 10 Dec. 1840, William Clayton Collection, LDS Church Archives; punctuation modernized and emphasis added.

2 Heber J. Grant, Conference Report 1919, p. 6.

3 William Clayton's Journal, The Deseret News, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1921.

4 David B. Haight, 1997 Church Sesquicentennial Celebration Address.

5 Robert L. Backman, You and Your World, "The Pioneer in Each of Us," 18 July 1982.

Young called for a band to be formed, and William was asked to be part of it. The band also played at nearby settlements for money and much needed supplies.

By April, the company had only come three hundred miles from Nauvoo. William Clayton was the clerk for the entire Camp of Israel and supervised all of the clerks of the groups of Fifty. Additionally, he was the primary scribe for President Young and Church councils, and assisted other brethren in keeping their journals. In his clerical role, he was responsible for overseeing his own wagons, as well as fifteen additional wagons and teamsters carrying property of the Church. His responsibility was to ensure that there was food for the teamsters and fodder for the draft animals, and that the goods remained dry.

The weight of responsibility upon his shoulders was great on the predawn morning of April 15th as he had found that cattle and horses, without proper guard during the

night, had broken into the tents and wagons. The weather had been miserable, causing many to sleep on wet ground, where they were pelted with continual rain and wind that toppled the tents. Many of the Saints were sick, due to the harsh weather and inadequate living conditions of leaky tents and wagons. Some were even dying.

William, himself, had been sick with first a cold, then aches and horrible chest pain and discomfort for over two weeks. Nevertheless, as he records, "yet the camp seems in good spirits." In the midst of such suffering, the positive pioneering spirit prevailed.

Then, almost as a gift, William received word that Diantha had given birth to a "fat" and healthy baby boy on 30 March. In his journal, he wrote, "Truly I feel to rejoice at this intelligence." The next day, with the perspective that he and the Saints were in the Lord's hands as they made their way toward a Zion they had not seen, William composed a song, which he called "All Is Well!" He then wrote, "This morning I composed a new song, . . . I feel to thank my Heavenly Father for my boy."³

His song became an anthem to the Saints. It put to words the compelling feeling in their hearts to press forward and not lose faith, for God was watching over them.

During the 150th anniversary celebration of the pioneers entering the Salt Lake Valley, Elder David B. Haight of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shared this commentary on the positive vision William Clayton has given to the world:

"Then he wrote those wonderful lines, 'We'll find the place which God for us prepared, / Far away in the West.' Even though we're stuck here in the mud and discouraged, this will all change. If we have the courage and the faith the Lord will answer our prayers; it will all come about. It gave them hope and encouragement . . .

"And then the last verse . . . 'And should we die before our journey's through, / Happy day! All is well!' So if we die, we've done our best. We're going to die sometime, as we all know. So 'Happy day! All is well!'

"But if our lives are spared again / To see the Saints their rest obtain.' We'll see if the wagon wheels will stay on and if the rims will stay on the little handcarts and if we can keep up that courage and the strength

Interesting Facts

- After bringing his family to Zion, William Clayton traveled the trail five times and made three transatlantic crossings to bring others to Zion.
- "Come, Come Ye Saints" was performed by the Winter Quarters band on Christmas Eve day, 1847, in the log tabernacle, Kanesville, prior to the sustaining of the new First Presidency.
- "Come, Come Ye Saints" has been in every hymnal since 1851.
- It is impossible to pinpoint exactly where this hymn was composed as the border of Iowa and Missouri was changed and disputed from 1816 until about 1895. Evidence suggests it was probably composed about five miles southeast of Sewell, south of where road J54 crosses Locust Creek.

through our prayers and we'll get there. 'If our lives are spared again / To see the Saints their rest obtain.' If we get there, then 'All is well! All is well!'—if we get there and if we have the courage to make it work. . . .

"I like [the] original title, 'All Is Well! All Is Well!' which explains our lives if we live as we should. We have the outline, we have the procedures, we have the information, and if we can get there and if our lives are spared again then we will be able to sing 'All is well! All is well!' That hymn has become the Church's 'national anthem.'"⁴

Latter-day Saints today usually don't have to leave their homes, travel dusty trails, or struggle to survive, but the song can have the same effect. The "trail" we must travel today can be illness, discouragement, financial stress, or loss of a loved one. It may be making the right decision at work, choosing to accept a challenging calling in the Church, or working out an obstacle in a family relationship. Says Elder Robert L. Backman, "It ["Come, Come Ye Saints"] is a rally cry for us today. Come, come let us work, share, live, and forgive each other. Let us bind up the wounds of hatred; overcome the creeds and philosophies that divide us as peoples of the world. . . . Let us work together for a better world. Come, come all of us. No toil nor labor fear, but with joy wend our way."⁵

Certainly there are difficult days and trying times ahead. In a turbulent and increasingly negative world, a positive pioneering spirit will be required of young and old alike. As challenges come, those who can stand fast with confidence that "all is well," will be empowered to lead others toward a more excellent way.

"Come, Come, Ye Saints" continues to share a spirit of strength and courage with the Saints today. We will again be asked as a pioneering people to do the difficult by a Lord who strengthens and gives confidence to his children. And if we do his will and follow the prophets, we too can add our voices and make this chorus swell: All is well! All is well! ▼

Rachel Matheson, at age 13, is an aspiring young writer and artist with particular interest in history including: LDS Church/Pioneer history, Civil War history and Revolutionary War history. She has gained unique insight and experience by living in Perth, Australia; San Diego, California; Port Angeles, Washington; Sandy, Utah, and currently resides in Hillsboro, Oregon.

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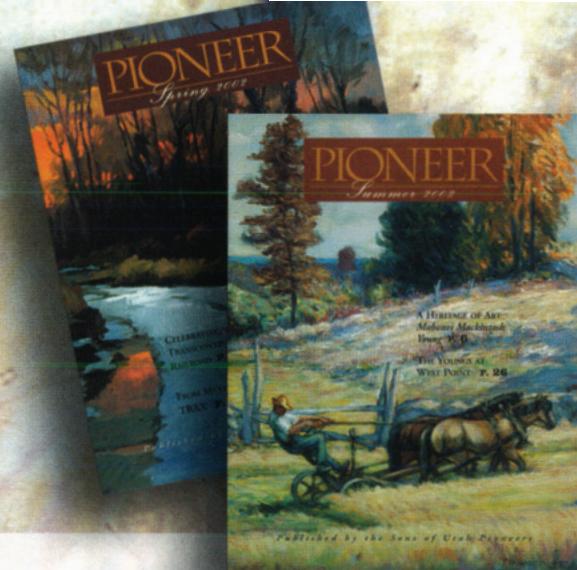
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